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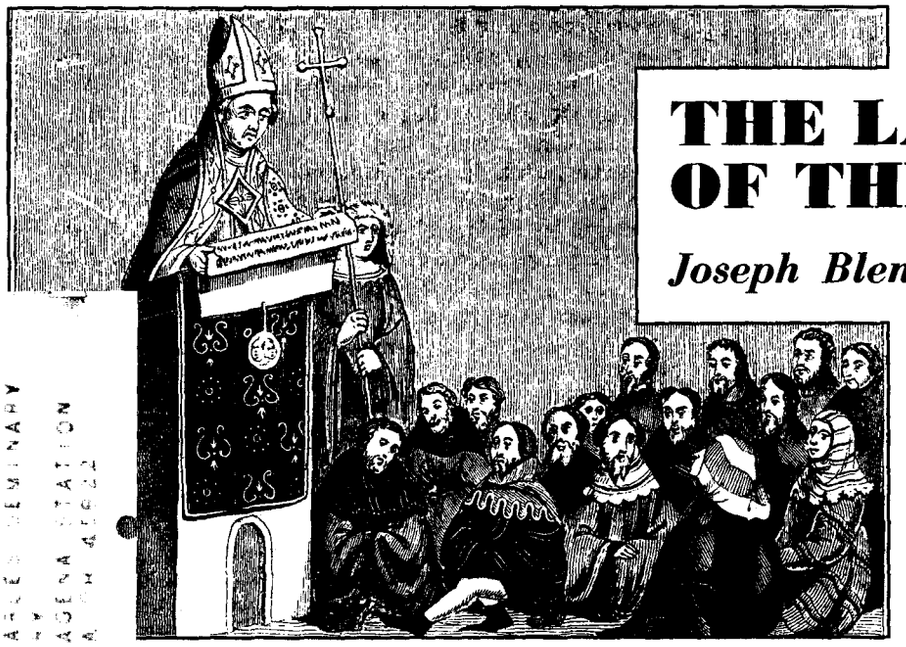

THE LANGUAGE OF THE TRIBE

Joseph Blenkinsopp

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LITURGICAL ISSUE

A JEWISH VIEW OF REDEMPTION

Carolyn R. Shaffer

MARTIN MARTY: *How to Tell Fad from Trend*
PHILIP NOBILE: *The Unmaking of Teddy White*
TOM FOX: *Operation Uplift in South Vietnam*

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NEWS & VIEWS

The Toll on Teddy

When the summing up is done, the great tragedy of Ted Kennedy's Cape Cod caper, after that of the death of Mary Jo Kopechne, is not the elimination of Kennedy, the presidential candidate for '72, but the neutralization of Kennedy the senator in '69.

Deserving or not, Kennedy commanded on senatorial matters an authority that was unique. No one of either party approached it — not Dirksen, not McGovern, not Fulbright, not Mansfield, not Muskie. No one.

The proof was in the Hamburger Hill speech. Unquestionably it was instrumental in turning around U.S. battlefield strategy in Vietnam.

If any other senator had delivered that same speech, the effect would have been nowhere comparable. Media coverage, some flurries of reaction, then forget it. U.S. troops would possibly still be about those insane search-and-destroy missions that kept U.S. deaths above 200 a week.

Well, it's a new ball game now. Kennedy will speak on issues as in the past, but his voice will be one among 100 in the upper chamber. The political prestige which was his inheritance and which gave automatic weight to any preference, any utterance of his is gone—at least for the foreseeable future.

Perhaps this is as it should be. Perhaps it is a dangerous thing to have too much leverage invested in one man outside the executive branch.

But, remember, Richard Nixon is President. And if that doesn't sober one on the urgency of a truly powerful influence among the loyal opposition, then one's due is the waltz-time rendition of government, which is the Nixon orchestration.

Conspiracy, Conspiracy

Chicago Daily News columnist L. F. Palmer, Jr., explains further the negative mood of blacks on Apollo 11 and the moon business: most TV and press eulogies to astronauts killed in the space program omitted mention of Robert H. Lawrence.

Major Lawrence, only U.S. black astronaut, died in a plane crash at Edwards Air Force Base in December, 1967. According to Palmer (7/26/69), "many blacks believe with a passion that astronaut Lawrence . . . was deliberately killed to keep a black man from achieving the high honor of being one of the nation's first spacemen." Culprit: the CIA.

Palmer doesn't espouse the conspiracy theory—not quite, at least. "What is enormously significant," he allows, "is that there are black Americans so alienated from their government that they can harbor such ghastly thoughts."

William Worthy is less indirect in writing in the *Boston Globe* (7/13/69) on another racially sensitive topic. He sees a national conspiracy aimed at black revolutionaries.

Worthy, who holds it was CIA bullets which cut down Malcolm X, builds his case on a score of incidents beginning with last autumn's blackjacking of Black Panthers by off-duty policemen in a Brooklyn court corridor.

"The systematic police and FBI crackdown is relentless," Worthy remarks, "usually unflamboyant, [and] centrally computerized from Washington."

Worthy may be overstating his theory, but conspiracy or not, the law's war on black militants is a hot one. You just don't read a whole lot about it. And when it does make print, you have trouble finding the story. The *New York Times*' piece on the police's shooting up of Panther offices in Chicago July 31 was tucked at the bottom of page 67 in a 68-page issue.

Going Over to the Cong

The *New York Times*' piece about the "many United States soldiers in South Vietnam who lack an ideological commitment to the war" (8/4/69) was tame stuff alongside the *London Express* report of a U.S. offensive against U.S. deserters to the Viet Cong.

According to a *London Express* press service story (6/28/69), "crack Green Beret troops are [being] used to track [deserters] down." Their orders: "kill the turncoats if it is impossible to capture them alive."

The *Express* added sardonically: "so far there have been no reports of a court martial for any Americans who joined the Viet Cong."

Many of the deserters are said to be Negroes, who, in the *Express*' words, "let it be known they are deserting as a gesture in support of the militant black movement in the U.S."

Electoral Reform?

The electoral reform bill, which would provide for direct election of the President and Vice President, is moving at last toward the floor.

The bill (HJ Res 681, SJ Res 1) sailed through the Judiciary Committee in April, was cleared by the Rules Committee in mid-July, and will likely be read for floor action after the summer recess.

But the bill's fortunes are far more dubious now than they were a few months ago, when the Wallace experience was still fresh in the psyche.

More and more folks like Congressmen Phillip Burton and Don Edwards, Democrats of California, are coming around to the Alexander Bickel position that the electoral college favors urban areas and that it's potentially dangerous to jettison the electoral college altogether.

One growing school of thought would retain the electoral college concept but eliminate the electors themselves. This would enable the *automatic* casting of a state's electoral votes and eliminate the hazard of errant electors looking for power brokers in the House of Representatives —a high-risk possibility, obviously, as politically the country moves right and south of center. JOHN DEEDY

Tony Auth/LNS

"If anyone asks, tell them we won!"

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CORRESPONDENCE

Seminary Crisis

Rockaway, N.J.

To the Editors: John Mahoney's report on the Detroit minor seminary situation [August 8] has echoes in practically every diocese of this country, yet many clerics and some laymen will criticize his frank account as far too pessimistic. I suggest that Professor Mahoney is, if anything, too *optimistic* in his report. He lists freshman enrollment a few years ago at nearly 200 and a prospective 50 for the coming fall. My freshman class in 1945 set a record of over 500, while the freshman class a few years later went over the 700-student mark. The enrollment drop then is from over 700 in the late 40s to less than 50 in 1969! ROBERT T. FRANCOEUR

Rendering to Caesar

Eugene, Ore.

To the Editors: I have just finished reading Mrs. Linda Forest's "The Milwaukee Fourteen" [June 27]. Her article is just about as melodramatic and schmaltzy as the one I read some time ago about the Catonsville Nine. . . . Her opening paragraph would have been considered a tear jerker in magazines whose literary heights are those of *True Romance*. Later on this paragraph would surely have filled up a bucket or two of tears, anger, pathos, and bathos: ". . . The storm of the applause was like the catalyst. Bailiffs scuttled like roaches from unseen hiding places, dragging supporters out of the courtroom by hair, feet, clothing, pitching them into the waiting camera lights where 'the whole world was watching'—or at least the metropolitan Milwaukee community." The protesters themselves are immature, unrealistic, egoists.

I have yet to see any of these "champions of the underprivileged, the

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THE GREAT ABM COUNTERFEIT

There is much grasping-after-straws over the Senate vote approving the Safeguard missile system. Some are able to see the vote as a spur to arms control talks with Russia; Mike Mansfield suggests that the narrowness of the margin of approval, 51-50, might dissuade Mr. Nixon from deploying the system; James Reston speculates that Mr. Nixon, having made his point on his right to install the ABM, might be satisfied to adopt a "wait and see" policy. Who's kidding whom? This is all so much self-delusion. The ABM has won endorsement, and the country—and the world—is stuck with a monster.

Neither can the strength of the anti-Safeguard wing be interpreted as some sign of victory. The ABM experience has radicalized no noticeable number of senators for peace; no national proclivities have been reversed. The American catalogue of priorities is precisely as it was. Military frivolities still take precedent over human needs; psychotic anti-Communism is still a basis for national policy. One should not even read too much into the Senate vote to make major Pentagon weapons' contracts subject to the scrutiny of the General Accounting Office. It was a fluke which will be corrected in the House. Besides, the vote relates to budgetary economy and arms efficiency as much as it does to any peace principle.

Everything, in a word, is in order. The test was tight, but the military-industrial complex remains a dominant fact of American life. The challenge mounted against it on the Safeguard issue was impressive, but the challenge having failed, the sluice gates are open full breadth. The Administration's ABM project is estimated between $10.8 and $13 billion, but that is only for openers. A fully-deployed system, a strong likelihood now, could run as high as $400 billion—a little detail which helps explain the alignments of industry, labor and the investment community. Militarism is good business.

In fact, the peace orientation of many senators notwithstanding and the sincerity of all allowed, it is difficult to suppress the thought that for all the bargaining and talk the Senate ABM exercise was a counterfeit—perhaps

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not a calculated counterfeit for many, or indeed for any, but a counterfeit in sum. For there were, practically speaking, no real options on the matter at hand. The alleged options were what? An Administration proposal which was realistically ABM, and the Cooper-Hart amendment which would have barred deployment, but which nevertheless would have permitted "research and development." Only the incorrigibly optimistic could hope that this research and development would be directed at demonstrating the impracticality of missile defense systems and lead to the shelving of the anti-ballistic idea.

Not even the supposedly radical amendment of Senator Margaret Chase Smith met the problem, for, whereas her amendment would have scuttled Safeguard altogether, it would still have allowed the $759.1 million in the military procurement bill for Safeguard to be used to research, develop and test alternative anti-ballistic systems, utilizing components previously planned for Safeguard. Hence, here too the end result would have been the same.

Politics, they tell us, is the art of the possible, and compromise a necessary blend. But, as the anti-ballistic missile controversy makes clear, compromise in America on military questions has a definition so limited that there are no politics for altering military presuppositions, at least not yet. We remain a nation which talks peace and ever conditions itself for war.

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After the Storm In St. Louis

Last May Cardinal John J. Carberry succeeded in removing 55 third- and fourth-year Catholic seminarians from a course in biblical studies at the St. Louis School of Divinity taught by an eminent Protestant theologian, Keith Nickle, even though the students preferred Nickle over a Catholic professor by a 5-1 vote. Opposition from the School was cautious—perhaps conditioned by the fact that while the Cardinal has no influence in selection of faculty or curriculum, as bishop he holds sway over Kenrick students, one-fourth of the student body, and their absence would create financial problems.

Interestingly enough, it was local Protestants who launched the most barbed attack on the Cardinal's position that Kenrick seminarians should be served by a Catholic scholar. Members of the faculty and administration of Eden Theological Seminary registered concern for the future of academic freedom and ecumenism in the local press, while the Lutherans, in their own publication, took the Cardinal to task for blocking the Lutheran-Catholic dialogue and for "idolatrous" worship of the Blessed Virgin.

It is precisely this area of biblical scholarship that reveals the split between current theological attitudes and the psychological bent of many church authorities who regard Protestant application of modern historical methods as a threat to the grounds of religious faith. That the school sustained a setback but not by any measure a disaster is perhaps due principally to the quiet persuasion of its Dean, Father Gerald F. Van Ackeren, S.J., a distinguished theologian and editor of *Theology Digest*, who mediated the discussion that resulted in a *détente*. In effect, the Cardinal may insist that the Kenrick students take instruction in *biblia* from a Catholic theologian; the School, however, has not changed its curriculum, and, holding the position that exegesis is not confessional in nature, offers, as it always has, instruction in biblical research from Catholic and Protestant scholars.

Van Ackeren, the man who in 1966 brought an isolated Jesuit seminary from the plains of Kansas into an urban setting, is a kind of reassuring figure, an innovator who has pioneered new patterns in theological education and a mediator who applied rationality when a difficult situation threatened what had been built. Long before the move from Kansas, Van Ackeren perceived that theological institutions would have to consolidate in order to enrich their curriculum, or drop from sight. "At St. Mary's we could bring in only a few noted lecturers, we had no university resources to draw upon, we were a closed community," he says. "Here in St. Louis we are in touch with the cultural, social, and economic realities of urban life, and we share our scholarly pursuits with other traditions."

The School of Divinity has in its official documents set forth a bold plan for teaching, research and community service carried out in the context of academic freedom. In its organizational pattern the School has shared resources with two nearby Protestant seminaries, Eden and Concordia, upgraded teaching, and brought notable figures, such as Karl Rahner, Robert McAfee Brown and Harvey Cox, to the campus as lecturers. Among the School's 300 students—these include Catholic and Protestant laymen, members of 21 religious orders, and diocesan scholars—there is a spirit of independence and a regard for the humanistic values of theology.

What was a provincial Jesuit seminary has modernized swiftly, adding the perspectives of psychology, sociology, education, psychiatry and medicine to the curriculum, and the more open and liberal ecumenical spirit to the educational experience. The School's by-laws make a rigid distinction between academic and spiritual concerns.

Summer Schedule

In keeping with the usual practice, *Commonweal* is again appearing on alternate weeks during July-September. Forthcoming issues will be dated September 5 and September 19. From then on, we will resume our normal weekly publishing schedule.

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In terms of library resources, the growth has been immense, for the School, located on the campus of St. Louis University, now may count on that institution's 700,000 volumes as a supplement to its own highly specialized 80,000 volume collection. The graduate program offers master's degrees in several theological disciplines, and doctoral studies in historical and scriptural theology, something that would not have been possible in Kansas. But obviously the School's most valuable resource is its faculty which has been recruited, not supplied, from across the nation and world—Jesuit scholars of note such as John W. Padberg, Dennis McCarthy and Richard F. Smith, and Protestant theologians such as Keith Nickle and Richard Tombaugh.

On the faculty are some Christian rebels and innovators who, if they are not discouraged and drop from the scene, will serve as links between tradition and modernity, such as the Reverend Richard Tombaugh, an Episcopalian who began his academic career as an instructor in biology at Columbia and is now keenly interested in working with people and computers to understand the dynamics of decision-making processes in urban areas.

But Father Edwin F. Falteisek, S.J., who specializes in ethics, the theology of sexuality, etc., and was a public dissenter on *Humanae Vitae*, points out that although seminary training is much less confining than it was a few years ago, the church has a long way to go. "It seems to me that most Roman Catholics have lived their lives in response to the expectations of others. Expectations of the Pope, expectations of the bishop, expectations of their pastor, and now individuals want to make their own moral decisions."

The fact that the School has lost some of its purely Jesuit character strikes Father Thomas N. Lay, S.J., as progressive. "When I was in the seminary ten years ago, we were very proud to walk around in our cassocks, wearing birettas, pulling out our breviaries and reading them. Now most of us don't go in for this routine." Lay, whose field is psychology of language and communication theory, feels that the church must learn from reflection on human experience to correct what at times is its own limited experience.

In re-defining the role of theology in modern life, the School of Divinity stands within the church system to take a critical look at what's there. It has set for itself an ambitious financial goal of $4 million to be raised within the next three years, for scholarships, faculty and building. Whether church authority will accept this liberal version of theological training, and assist its growth, is difficult to predict. But as Thomas Lay says, "The institution's growth, its academic achievement, may be the result of continual strife, of preparing ourselves and others for the unpredictable." ANDREW L. PIEROVICH

(*Andrew L. Pierovich is a writer who now lives in California. This is his first appearance in* Commonweal.)

The Assassination Of Tom Mboya

Nairobi, Kenya

Kenya has put on a normal face after the tense week of sporadic violence set off by the assassination of Tom Mboya earlier this month. News related to the assassination has all but disappeared from the Voice of Kenya news broadcasts. Here in Nairobi tourists mill around the outdoor cafe of the fashionable New Stanley Hotel, which was cleared by stray fumes of tear gas used to disperse crowds of stone-throwing Africans at the funeral Mass for Mboya. Disturbances in outlying areas of the country ceased with the burial of the slain cabinet minister. But though the threat of further violence has apparently passed for now, the question remains whether Kenya is up to dealing with the long-range threat to its political stability posed by tribal tensions that surfaced with the assassination.

It is ironic that the death of Tom Mboya should spark violent expressions of tribal animosity between Kenya's two largest tribes, the Kikuyu and the Luo. Mboya was that rare African political animal, a non-tribal politician. A Luo, he was the most prominent minister in President Jomo Kenyatta's Kikuyu-dominated government. Party and national interests took precedence over tribal allegiance. His non-tribal stance acted as a kind of safeguard for minority interests. His extraordinary skill as Secretary-General of the ruling Kenya African National Union (KANU) was greatly responsible for keeping the faction-ridden party together. Mboya's contribution to national unity is something that is appreciated here more in death than in life.

Mboya's non-tribal political character, an asset to the country, was a liability to his political future. Here as in most African countries, political power has a tribal base. Born and raised near Nairobi, far from the Luo areas around Lake Victoria, Mboya was never a Luo leader, but an urban politician whose Nairobi constituency was made up of Africans of different tribes. Without a tribal base it was unlikely that Mboya would have succeeded the 77-year-old Kenyatta, as many in the West had assumed.

Far from being a Luo leader, Mboya was in fact resented by many of his fellow tribesmen. Real Luo support rests with Oginga Odinga, who broke with the pro-West KANU in 1966 to form a left-wing opposition party, sympathetic to the Eastern powers, particularly China. Though it originally had a broader base, Odinga's party, the Kenya Peoples' Union (KPU), is today virtually a Luo Party, in great measure because of government harassment.

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Suspect as a Luo alive, Mboya however became a Luo cause when he died. With the identity of the assassin a mystery, segments of the Luo community apparently chose to interpret the assassination as the ultimate expression of their victimization at the hands of the Kikuyu. Kikuyus in Luo areas were put under police protection in the disturbances following Mboya's death in which several were killed. At the rioting which broke out in downtown Nairobi at the funeral Mass, rioters shouted out the KPU slogan, as they stoned President Kenyatta's car and government buildings.

As one local reporter (a Luo himself) put it, Mboya's death suddenly transformed him into a symbol of Luo unity. The week-long rites of mourning fast became an exclusively Luo affair. Faces were carefully scanned as mourners filed passed Mboya's open casket at his Nairobi home; Kikuyus apparently were not welcomed. One report had it that Luos there were unwilling to release the body for the funeral Mass—a state occasion with government leaders and the diplomatic corps present—and did so only at the urging of Luo elder, Oginga Odinga. The following day the body was taken out to Luo Nyanza Province for another funeral Mass and burial in the homeland of Mboya's father.

The government has taken pains to head off any tribal interpretation of the assassination and any emotional and political advantage that might accrue to the KPU. Addressing a packed press conference a week after the assassination, Vice President Daniel arap Moi, speaking for the government, said it discounted theories that the assassination was the responsibility of one whole community within Kenya or that the Western powers were involved. Without naming any names, but leaving little to the imagination, Moi hinted darkly at international conspiracy and accused a Kenya political party of using Mboya's death to foment tribalism. (The day before, both English-language dailies featured stories with pictures on the refusal of the Chinese embassy to lower their flag to half-mast as the government had requested.) Odinga, while calling for calm, at the same time criticized the government for clouding the issue with cold war politics.

What tends to get lost in all this is that Kenya, Africa and the world have lost a leader of exceptional caliber. In the light of his limited political future here, Tom Mboya was a likely candidate for Secretary-General of the United Nations in the 1970s, having had the right geographic qualifications and an international standing to go with his considerable skills of mediation and administration. Certainly he will be missed here in Kenya where as Minister of Economic Planning and Development he showed an intelligence and pragmatism that has encouraged economic growth. And though he appeared to be sidetracked politically, Mboya was a young man (39) and no one knows to what advantage his non-tribal influence would have been put when Kenya is

Operation Uplift In Vietnam

Saigon

With the passing years of American commitment the heavy weight of Western values is taking its toll on Vietnamese culture. To the younger "war generation," especially those living in cities and areas of heavy American concentration, Armed Forces Radio is more popular than Vietnamese radio since it keeps the young up on the latest "tops in pops" tune survey.

The Beatles, Animals, and Ohio Express are now paid as much tribute as the traditional "cai Luong" or folk opera. The eager search for the "American way" does not cease with television, mini-skirts, and folk-rock. It is making even greater penetrations into the Vietnamese conception of beauty.

Playboy pinups are common in Vietnam. The simplest families are not embarrassed to show the bunnies if they own a picture. But to the bargirls who ape Western beauty the urge is felt to take on their features as well. Higher noses and rounder eyes were once limited to the select few who had the mobility and money to make their way to Tokyo—as was the case with Madame Ky. Now Vietnamese doctors are moving in on the fad and performing operations to change faces, enlarge breasts, raise buttocks, and broaden hips. This variety of service is presently available in Saigon at moderate cost and little fuss.

"Advancing techniques and a changing mood are the two major reasons why there has been such an increase lately," Doctor Pham Huu Luong, one of Saigon's plastic surgeons and head of the Vietnamese Surgical Society, explained to me. "Even my personal nurse has had eyes and nose operations," he added, pointing to a middle-aged woman who appeared to blush with pride. "More girls seek operations than I have time to treat."

Doctor Pam Ba Vien, trained in Japan, is considered the pioneer of Vietnamese plastic surgery. He has been reshaping bodies for the past ten years, but dates the popularity of the operations back to the American build-up in 1965. Now he estimates as many as eighty to one hundred operations of this kind are performed each week in Saigon alone. Many others, especially the wives of generals and ministers, continue to go to the Nikatzu Hotel in Tokyo. Doctor Vien is skeptical about the rea-

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finally forced to address itself to finding a successor to Kenyatta.

That Kenya, independent only six years has experienced relatively minor disturbances after the assassination of one of its leading political figures is itself a tribute to the stability of the country. Whether the government will take advantage of its good fortune and attempt to deal with the real inequalities, economic and otherwise, spotlighted by Odinga and the KPU, is an open question. Certainly it can ill afford to further isolate the Luo and so lump economic grievances with tribal grievances. The first post-independence elections, promised for next year, are sure to be a test of whether some sort of healing will have emerged from the tragic death of Tom Mboya.

THOMAS WOODWARD

(Thomas Woodward is the pseudonym of an American now in Kenya.)

White Church and Black Business

If Unitarian-Universalism can be tersely described, one would say that its members resist orthodoxy. Thus, delegates to the past two summer conventions of the Unitarian Universalist Association have strongly resisted demands for funds for all-Negro social action organizations.

Critics of the UUA Black Affairs Council (BAC), now operating on its second annual no-strings-attached $250,000 appropriation, contend that the program commits the denomination to a program of racial separatism. The blacks counter that the only way to achieve "black liberation, black empowerment and black self-determination" is to free black social action programs from white institutional control.

Funding of the BAC program in 1968 has been seen as the model for James Forman's summer tour of national church conventions. Forman has pressed his Black Manifesto on the New York Archdiocese, the Riverside Church in New York, the Presbyterian General Assembly in San Antonio, the Reformed Church of America and the National Council of Churches in New York and other bodies. Central to the Manifesto is the now-familiar demand for $500 million in reparations for Forman's National Black Economic Development Conference, "an armed, well-disciplined, black-controlled movement to insure the stamping out of racism in this country." When the BAC delegation returned to the UUA General Assembly in Boston this July with demands differing from Forman's, observers from other denominations looked closely to see how all this might soon apply to them.

The assembly split when BAC challenged a proposed

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sons why so many now find the operations fashionable, but nevertheless operates on those who feel the need. Although television and movie stars also seek instant plastic beauty, it is among the bargirls who have become wealthy since the arrival of the Americans, the Vietnamese doctors agree, that the demands to operate are now highest.

"Since a bargirl's capacity to earn is based on her ability to attract American males," said Doctor Luong, "many desire operations to make themselves more beautiful to them. Others just prefer larger noses and breasts. Some are giving in to the fad of the time."

A nose operation, including the silicon nosepiece, runs about thirty thousand piasters in all, or roughly two hundred fifty dollars. Eye operations are a little less expensive at fifteen thousand piasters or one hundred twenty dollars. A new set of enlarged breasts, including the price of silicon, runs a bit higher at thirty five thousands or two hundred ninety dollars. Nose and eye operations are the most common though some girls have had all three overhauls at once. There is still some concern about the long range effects of silicon treated buttocks "owing to the problem of slippage." None of the doctors expressed fear of cancer, however, since silicon is considered safe and reliable.

Many "women of taste," Doctor Vien told me, do not care to give their names in order to avoid adverse publicity. Rather, operations are performed with a simple number system which allows the women anonymity.

Nguyen Thi Nhan, however, is not ashamed. She believes, as do so many of the girls in one of Saigon's most exclusive bars, that she looks more beautiful with her new nose. Of the fourteen girls who work in the bar, eight have had operations of one kind or another to change their facial or body features.

Doctor Phan Ba Hai, trained in the United States, is the most active of the Vietnamese plastic surgeons. He operates on as many as fifty girls a week, according to his wife who filed a suit of "negligence" against him. She told a Saigon court his heavy load left him no time with the family. Apart from Doctors Luong, Vien and Hai, one or two others practice without license; their services are considered reliable and are a bit less expensive.

The Western facial fad is in full swing. It is impossible to determine its survival at this point. For the time being Vietnam is seduced by the American succubus and its confused society does not seem to be sure which way to turn.

TOM FOX

(Tom Fox, a doctoral candidate in Asian Studies at Yale, is presently in Southeast Asia for Commonweal.)

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$50,000 appropriation to Black and White Action (BAWA), a racially mixed group which said it sought to fight racism in the white community while BAC maintained its multiplicity of ghetto programs. BAC spokesmen said the UUA commitment to black self-determination would be diluted if BAWA were funded. BAC put it on an either-or basis and won its point narrowly, 749-737.

Having voted that only one could be funded, the delegates stuck with BAC. Rev. John O. Fisher of Eastham, Mass. has threatened to stop the appropriation in court on the grounds that about 50 delegates under 21 were ineligible to vote under Massachusetts corporate law. Youth may have carried the day for BAC, supporting the blacks in the first two days in an effort to move up the matter to first priority on the agenda. Failing to dislodge the matter from its regular order, youths and blacks walked out on the convention, returning the next day at the voted request of the remaining delegates.

The BAC program has weighed heavily on the UUA $2.8 million budget, which is running at a $600,000 deficit. The difference has been made up by digging into unrestricted capital, which fell from $1.4 million last year to $900,000 at present. The bulk of the denomination's $11 million capital has been restricted to a variety of purposes by its donors, programs such as ministerial and seminary support and religious education.

Jubilant in defeating the integrationist BAWA, BAC turned to a demand for reinvestment of restricted capital along the lines of Forman's Black Manifesto, with the nature of the investments to be determined exclusively by blacks. Other denominational leaders quickly started taking notes. It is one thing to argue we have no free funds, they were telling themselves. But the Unitarians are poor compared with the Roman Catholic Church, the Christian Scientists, the Protestant denominations and the Jewish faiths. If the Unitarians could be forced to hand over vast blocks of capital to blacks for reinvestment, who might be socked next, they wondered.

BAC announced it wanted $5 million to reinvest in land acquisition, cooperative ventures, black publishing houses, black TV stations, "and most especially [to sell] stocks presently invested in war-related and racist enterprises." As debate progressed, however, BAC ran into a stone wall of legal problems, which finally defeated them.

UUA Finance Committee Chairman Charles Davidson told delegates that the "prudent man rule" legally prevents trustees personally liable for trust fund performance from making investments in businesses which stand to return far less income than blue chip stocks, mutual funds, municipal bonds and other traditionally secure ventures.

Schroeder Boulton, investment broker and special financial advisor to the UUA trustees backed Davidson. "Trustees could end up in jail if they redirected $5 million and had it come back to them 10 or 15 years later as $2 million because they put their money in unprofitable, but socially desirable businesses."

Davidson further noted that for every percentage point of return lost on a less profitable venture, the church would receive $50,000 less income, on a $5 million investment.

BAC countered that this objection rests on the false premise that there are no profitable black-owned businesses. "The whole problem is that the financial wealth of the country is controlled by white businessmen," according to the Rev. Jack Mendelsohn, outgoing minister of Boston's Arlington Street Church and one of the two whites on the BAC Board. "They are the same people who sit on the finance committees of the foundations and the churches."

Rev. Mendelsohn notes that requirements for bonding and full financial experience work against the potential black capitalist. "But where the banks, the foundations and churches apply the same standards for white and black businessmen, they find that the black enterprises have an equal chance for success."

BAC is not without sympathy in the foundation and the church establishment. The UUA Convention, while voting down BAC's reinvestment demand, ratified its Finance Committee report, which vowed to stretch the prudent man rule to its limit and seek to expand it through court action.

The UUA has a powerful ally in the Ford Foundation. Making the rounds this summer in churches and foundations is a special study written for Ford titled "The Law and Lore of Endowment." Charitable and religious institutions, the report says, should be permitted to spend a "prudent portion" of the capital gains of their investments, instead of limiting themselves to income from interest and dividends. The change is necessary now, according to financial advisor Boulton, because the case law preventing such expenditures developed early in the century, when prices were far more stable. With capital gains more the rule at present, Ford is arguing that certain organizations, like the UUA, should be permitted to put their gains to work, instead of being forced to sit and get richer when they might not wish to.

It seems unlikely that as much capital as the blacks have demanded from the UUA (and may soon be demanding from other churches) can ever be freed. To the extent that the courts will allow, however, the UUA has committed itself to not seeking the maximum return on every dollar put to work in socially desirable enterprises.

As for continuing the attack on the prudent man rule, Rev. Mendelsohn predicts "this could be the new frontier in law and business for socially committed young professionals."

NEIL THOMAS

(Mr. Thomas, a freelance writer and human relations consultant, attended the Unitarian Universalist convention as a delegate from his church in Harrisburg, Pa.)

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THE LANGUAGE OF THE TRIBE

Corrupting the word

JOSEPH BLENKINSOPP

In his apologia, *A Question of Conscience,* Charles Davis castigated the leadership of the Catholic Church for having corrupted the word. He took this phrase "the corruption of the word" from Robert Adolfs who himself got it from Josef Pieper's address delivered in 1964 before the University of Berlin entitled "the corruption of the word and power." The charge did not refer merely to the use of a decadent mandarin style in encyclicals and other official pronouncements but to the manipulation of language in the interests of an authoritarian structure and the élite which operated it. Pieper in fact was talking in his lecture of the manipulation and abuse of *political* language.

It is possible that in the heat of the moment Davis over-dramatized the dictatorial and authoritarian intentions fed into the language, but the point was nevertheless worth making. It can hardly be questioned, in the first place, that this kind of language lacks immediacy and the power to convince. More important, it appears to suggest by implication that the primary function of language is *to assert*, and in particular to assert truths which are somehow antecedent and pre-existent to the language in which they are embodied. This raises questions about the primary function of language and how it relates to the continuous coming-into-existence of man throughout history—in other words, to the relation between language and tradition. These questions must be raised, precisely on account of the insistence in recent pronouncements that traditional formulations must not be altered.

Anyone who considered it worthwhile to take up Davis' suggestion of subjecting "official" church language to a critical analysis might begin at the most obvious point—a little *passé* to be sure—namely, the use of a dead language (Latin) for the promulgation of encyclicals and other official documents. The reason why a dead language is used was stated succinctly in the encyclical *Veterum Sapientia* (The Wisdom of the Ancients) of 1962: "the Church, precisely because it embraces all nations, and is destined to endure to the end of time, *of its very nature* requires a language which is universal, *immutable* and non-vernacular" (my italics). Here there lurks an ambiguity to note which provides a clue as to what is wrong with this official language. A language no longer spoken and in which consequently no one any longer thinks is deemed most apt to express unchangeable truths *in an unchangeable way*. This seems to imply what has already been suggested: that such truths are totally antecedent to language, that the primary function of language is to assert or re-assert, and that it is possible to come by a language which expresses exhaustively and for all time an unchanging content of reality.

In order to avoid misrepresenting the authority-crisis we should note first of all the function of language as the vehicle of tradition. As commonly understood, tradition is objectified in texts which, according to the updated view, include biblical texts. It is true that the Vatican II constitution on revelation identified tradition at one point with the life of the church itself—*omne quod ipsa est*—but how is this to be understood? Official theology has always distinguished between passive tradition—the content of what is passed on—and active tradition—the actual process of transmission. It is in this distinction that the ambiguity in the use of language can be detected, since the process of transmission depends on how you understand the content. If the content is a set of state-

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ments or assertions couched in incorrigible language the process can hardly consist in anything but repetition. Naive as this may seem, it appears to be a view shared by Paul VI and his advisors and can be heard clearly in recent laments that "the exact formulas in which the doctrine has been authoritatively defined seem to be abandoned" and repeated warnings against the temptation of "tampering with the integrity of sacred writings."

It is not difficult to spell out what is implied in this view. Texts, statements, assertions, propositions, etc., which have survived from the past, present themselves to us conditioned by the time and situation in which they came into existence. They constitute what Merleau-Ponty calls "the linguistic debris of the past" or Dilthey "the remains of human existence contained in writing." To endow them with an autonomous existence of their own, to isolate them from the situation to which they spoke, the question at a given point of history to which they responded, the particular understanding of existence which they embody, is necessarily to falsify our present relation to them.

In other words, by simply repeating the formulations of the past we destroy the distance between past and present, a procedure which has always been characteristic of mythical thinking. The result is that functionally tradition is identified with myth. What seems to be happening to the *magisterium* at the moment is that, by reducing tradition to repetition, it appears less as the agent and guardian of tradition, more as the custodian of a tribal myth rapidly losing its hold on the community in which it is supposed to operate.

Language which simply repeats and reinforces the statements of the past is not traditional at all but tribal. Tribalism involves fixed and inviolable forms of words and deals in myths every word of which must be preserved intact. In other words, it seeks for group-solidarity and cohesion in incorrigible language. After a long rear-guard action, continued right into Vatican II, the Catholic Church has by and large abandoned biblical fundamentalism. But what we are now beginning to realize is that biblical fundamentalism is only one aspect of linguistic fundamentalism.

The polarization of Scripture and tradition which went on throughout the Middle Ages and was crystallized at the Reformation was based on a misapprehension as to how language functions. At both poles language is objectified in a way which makes it impossible for the past to speak. The language preserved from the past is exploited, texts are used as ammunition (it is no coincidence that the Bible was first divided into verses during the Reformation period) with the result that a genuine re-interpretation of the past, an ongoing mediation of past into present, was rendered impossible. Misleading as it has proved to be in some respects, Luther's distinction between *littera* and *spiritus* at least pointed a way out of the impasse by indicating the need to go beyond the text to the world of meaning out of which the text came in the first place. While both Protestant and Catholic have been guilty of manipulating and exploiting the language of the past, ecclesiastical fundamentalism has on the whole been more harmful than biblical fundamentalism. It is no use freeing the Scriptures from bondage to verbal inspiration if at the same time the biblical texts are deprived of the future to which they continually point.

In order to clarify the issue further it may be useful to contrast the pre-Vatican II Catholic distinction between passive and active tradition with that of the Protestant church historian Gerhard Ebeling between *traditum* (what is passed on) and *traditio* (genuine tradition). In so far as the former is understood as *praeteritum*, that which is merely past, it can have no vital reference to the present and the future. Of itself, what is merely past can never touch our lives. The genuine idea of tradition, on the other hand, involves us in an ongoing process of re-interpreting and "translating" the past so that the immediacy out of which the "traditional" statements originated may, if possible, once again "happen," become event for us and open up the future. But this process is only possible when we take seriously the past-ness of the words and the distance which separates us from the event which called them into existence in the first place. Also, there can be no "traditioning" unless we go behind the text, the literary debris, to what the text was there for and, as Ebeling point out in *Word and Faith,* "the text is not there for its own sake but for the sake of the word-event which is the origin *and future* of the text" (my italics).

It is therefore the worst possible misunderstanding of tradition to think of it solely in terms of repeating or restating. To do so is to condemn oneself to live in the past rather than creatively out of the past into the future. To tradition in the sense defined by Ebeling is to live in historical tension, to take one's existence in history seriously, to live in a real sense in the world. It is to be involved in a process of continually mediating the past into the present which requires that we both question the understanding of existence recoverable from the past and at the same time allow ourselves to be questioned by it.

The process in which Paul VI and the curial theologians are currently involved is of a quite different nature. Having absolutized and deep-frozen the self-understanding of the church, their task has been to maintain the illusion of continuity where it is quite clear to the uncommitted outsider—not to mention many inside—that there is no continuity at all. This doesn't always lead to such an obvious *reductio ad absurdum* as the statement of Monsignor Vallainc on the birth-control issue that a condition of certainty exists and that when the pope made his long-awaited statement the church would pass from one state of certainty to

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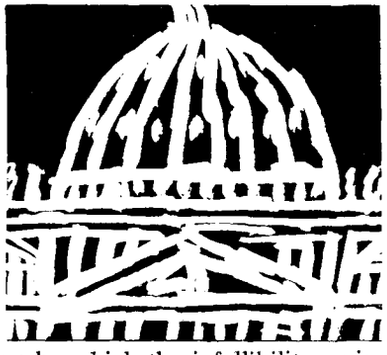
another. (As it happened, this passage proved to be unnecessary.) A less obvious example would be the teaching on biblical inspiration where the statements of Vatican II maintained the illusion of continuity despite the general abandonment of positions held in previous statements such as *Providentissimus Deus* issued seventy-two years earlier and the more recent *Divino Afflante Spiritu*.

Authentic language is, above all, honest language. Without this honesty the teaching authority may survive but its authority will be limited to that of caretaker of a cemetery.

If authentic language comes out of authentic living, if the word cannot be cut off from the primordial word-event or frozen in the lens of a camera held above the traffic flow of history, what do we do with this dogma of infallibility? It makes little difference that infallibility inheres in a person not a statement so long as that person is judged capable of issuing "irreformable definitions" (the phrase used in the constitution on the Church). This particular objectification of language defeats itself on several counts.

In the first place, as Merleau-Ponty indicated, we always have the feeling that our language expresses totally but it is never really so. Of its nature language is symbolic, pointing beyond itself to the complex event within which it arose, which is also true of so-called dogmatic statements. In this respect the old term "symbols of faith" is particularly relevant. Moreover, there



is no criterion by which the infallibility or irreformability of such a definition can be evaluated. By the very fact of being declared infallible it is robbed of any self-authenticating quality it might possess. That the only such definition in the century since the First Vatican Council dealt with the taking up of Mary body and soul into heaven raises the question in an acute form: how can you have a statement which is at the same time both infallible and irrelevant?

Quite apart from the difficulty of considering this definition traditional after the progress made in defining tradition in Vatican II, there is the question how anything which has no demonstrable connection with the experience of reality which can be expected of modern man can be responsibly appropriated by him. What we have here, it seems, is a clear indication—not by any means the only one—that the process of objectification referred to earlier has now reached the point of total evisceration.

The only alternative to recommending a statement or definition by virtue of its own immediacy or relevance is to impose it by the exercise of authority, which brings us back to the relation between the much discussed problem of authority in the church and tradition. Though he did not refer explicitly to the Roman Catholic Church, Ebeling brings out this relation very clearly when he states that a view of tradition as *praeteritum* issues sooner or later in "an authority whose authoritativeness can be experienced, like that of the state, only under the wielding of extrinsic power."

In the kind of world we inhabit it is becoming increasingly difficult to maintain any mystique of authority or of the authoritative word. The same is true of "the authority of Scripture" as anyone engaged in theological education will know. Appeal cannot be made with any confidence to the authority of the Bible as an ultimate neither requiring nor allowing for explanation—such an appeal was problematic even before the collapse of neo-orthodoxy. We are being forced to think in terms not of authority but authenticity, the ability to convince, the immediacy communicated through the language; and the same will be true *a fortiori* of official ecclesiastical pronouncements. The word is corrupted when it is appropriated or usurped and made an instrument of coercion, when it is exploited for ideological ends, in the interests of a particular group and its controlling élite.

Political (in the pejorative sense of ideological) language is language subjugated to the pursuit of power and influence. What marks it out in the first place is its non-reciprocating character, a use of key symbols and clichés as focal points for sentiment and a studied ambiguity of expression especially when an outright statement might prove embarrassing. While it does not absolutely preclude honesty it does not promote it either. Much of the fascination exercised by Senator McCarthy on the public during his campaign must be explained by his disavowal of political jargon and rhetoric in favor of a direct, clear, almost matter-of-fact way of speaking. If we can imagine McCarthy elected pope and using the same kind of address (minus the poetry) in covering the issues Paul VI has dealt with over the past few years, the point may emerge more clearly and poignantly. We might, for example, have been spared the embarrassment of hearing that the birth control issue was "not in doubt but under study."

Historically, the representation of the Catholic church as a monarchic state—very clear in pre-Vatican II textbooks on ecclesiology—has been much influenced by the increasingly exaggerated claim of divine right for the papacy. This claim eventuated in the dogma of papal infallibility of 1870 which was, needless to say, a time-conditioned statement not unconnected with the des-

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perate attempt of the papacy to survive as a political and territorial power. Though the situation has greatly changed in the interval between Pius IX and Paul VI the political and ideological language of that epoch, though now tired and battered, has not yet been phased out.

If the connection argued above between the crisis of authority and tradition can be sustained, it may be suggested that the crisis will not be overcome until we find a non-objectifying, non-dominative way of thinking of the traditioning process since it is this which keeps the *magisterium* in a fatal bind. Whatever solution is proposed will imply the abandonment of any hankering after incorrigible language or formulae to which authority is attributed and allegiance demanded as of right.

So, for example, in Paul VI's encyclical on the Eucharist, which aroused about the same reactions as that on ecclesiastical Latin, it was insisted that the traditional term "transubstantiation" was not expendable and could not be substituted by other terms such as "transsignification." Quite apart from the fact that "transubstantiation" appears only in the twelfth century and therefore can hardly be described as traditional at all, the question is bound to arise by what reason one historically and culturally conditioned objectification must remain normative for all time. In view especially of the way the Eucharist is described by those who first celebrated it, whose way of speaking about it is most charged with immediacy and authenticity of a kind which can be *experienced,* it must seem odd to say the least that we are to think of real presence primarily in terms taken from the natural sciences. We might ask, for example, whether fatherhood or sonship are constituted *essentially and primarily* by biological descent and not rather by an experienced relationship brought into existence by the mutual calling of names—"abba, father," "you are my beloved son." The same perhaps unconscious aversion to thinking in relational terms comes through with even greater clarity in *Humanae Vitae;* a point which has been made so often that further comment would be superfluous.

While authoritarianism in the church cannot be explained exclusively by reference to a deficient understanding of tradition, this is certainly an important aspect and one which has been generally neglected. Not surprisingly, since Catholic theology in general has long suffered through neglect of the hermeneutical problem or through confining it solely to the understanding and interpretation of the Scriptures. One model which would lead away from the literalist and objectifying approach to the past may be taken from Hans-Georg Gadamer, a leading exponent of what is called "the new hermeneutics," whose book *Wahrheit und Methode* (Truth and Method) is shortly to appear in English.

For Gadamer the ongoing traditioning process may be compared with what happens in a successful conversation. In order to converse successfully you have to take in the "horizon of understanding" of the other into your own which implies willingness to broaden your own horizon and therefore ultimately to undergo change. In this process the peculiarities of each are, ideally at least, overcome in a new and richer understanding which has the power to open up the future. As everyone knows, conversing with someone who has made up his mind in advance and whose only purpose is to absorb the "horizon" of the other is not only boring but useless. Any possibility of genuine dialogue and therefore of progress is ruled out from the start. Following this analogy—which is imperfect but useful—we should have to conclude that to tradition involves confronting one's own self-understanding with that which has gone into the language preserved from the past and bringing both together in a creative tension. As in a good conversation, a new and richer experience could then emerge from which we could draw resources for our own self-understanding and the direction we are to take into the future.

If this were ever to happen, if the official spokesmen of the Catholic church could be brought to think of tradition in relational rather than dominative terms, as an outgoing dialogue with the past rather than a sacred *objet d'art* which has to be handed on "essentially undamaged" (a recent phrase of Paul VI), we might hope that a situation would then exist in which the authority-crisis would eventually solve itself *ambulando.* At least we would have a milieu less favorable to the development of personality disorders in those in authority. Whether this will ever happen, whether we can ever expect to hear fresh, living language—even prophetic language—as long as the present structures remain, God alone knows. But in the meantime the task is also incumbent on us.

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JOHN FANDEL

NARREME

Immanent eschaton: Heaven now—
almost the same, two ways of putting it—
or Hell—the extreme alternatives—
is the thrust.
On the bough
nearest the window, hard figbuds are knit
tightly contained until easing gives
green dominion and the bough bends low
with fruit in season, rounding, split
at last with ripeness the bee sieves
in honeyed August.
But, "Let no fruit grow
on thee hereafter, ever," comes back, fit
alternative, and the dead tree lives.

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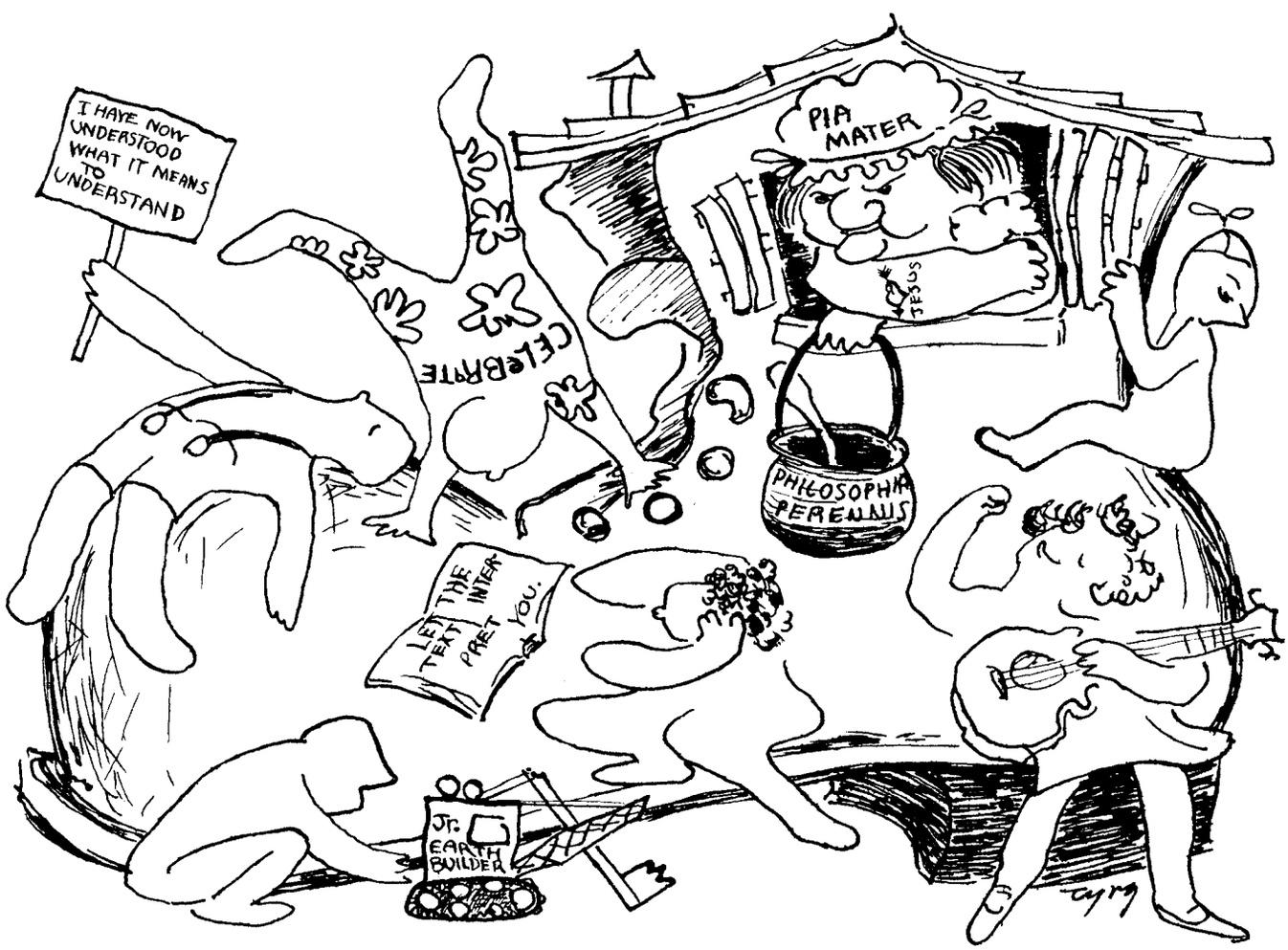
HOW TO TELL A FAD FROM A TREND

MARTIN E. MARTY

IF THE DECADE ahead is anything like the one just dying, avant garde Christians will need all the help they can get to make sense of passing theological fancies. The past half dozen years have produced excitements, experiments, and innovations. They have also given birth to fashions and fads.

People who read theology have limited time at their disposal. They cannot waste time on the ephemeral. They have to concentrate on what will stimulate them, enhance their reputations, or advance their careers. They have limited opportunities. It is crucial for them to judge properly the potential of various theological offerings or they may get invited to the wrong conferences. Worse, they may not get invited to the right ones.

Ten years ago no one could have foreseen that a "How To" guide to help people sort the passing from the durable in theology would ever be needed. Protestants, for example, were in the habit of expecting movements to last a century. They could rattle off, "16th century Reformation, 17th century Orthodoxy, 18th century Rationalism, 19th century Liberalism," with a perfect rhythmic sense. Neo-orthodoxy was only two-score years old. Then in



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1963 Bishop Robinson's *Honest to God* interrupted the rhythm when it caught the bookselling world off guard. That bestseller suggested that a new pace, a new scope, and a new intensity in religious thought was here.

Catholics entered the decade with little to look forward to. Nothing had happened for a century, since Johann Adam Möhler and John Henry Newman had talked about development—or at least little had occurred since the Pope's condemnation of Modernism had forbidden others to speak about it. Catholics had the sense that nothing could ever happen again. Little did. One could move backward, as neo-Thomists did, or go underground in the biblical and liturgical movements. Then came the Vatican Council; within the decade we have passed through pre-ecumenical, ecumenical, and post-ecumenical thought, and each phase carried a dozen variants.

THE RULES FOR telling fads from trends and movements are fairly simple. The first is easiest. Since a fad is, obviously, a bad thing, nothing which is attractive to *you* can be a fad. Fads are other people's temporary obsessions.

The second rule is more difficult since it deals with that temporary character. This involves the fact that one cannot finally tell what is a fad until it is over. To know that is not much help to people who might be suckered into responding to one, but it is of great help for Monday morning quarterbacking. Here are the measures: a fad lasts one publishing season (a half year); a trend lasts a year; a movement lasts at least a year and a half, or three seasons. (For one terrifying moment when McLuhanism fused with Radical Theology this mode of measuring was in jeopardy. The medium-message people told us that henceforth theology was to be done over the telephone or television, during freedom marches, or in dashed-off memos, but not in books. We all enjoyed the books in which they announced this, but their announcement was a one-season fad and no one need worry longer about it.)

Intensity is the third factor: everyone must be talking about the phenomenon while it is in its prime. All theology must be reduced to its terms. One hindsight measure for determining whether an entity is worth discussing at all is to see if a debate-book follows. *The Secular City* produced *The Secular City Debate; The Future of Belief* spawned *The Future of Belief Debate; Situation Ethics* bore *The Situation Ethics Debate; Honest to God* started it all with the *Honest to God Debate*. These were all indicative of trends or movements. Only *The Death of God* to *The Death of God Debate* marked a period of a fad, for accidental publishing reasons about which we will learn more later.

Size, fourth. The smaller the number of leaders, the more likely the phenomenon will turn out to have been a fad. A fad allows for not more than four gurus; a trend can sustain a few more; a movement allows for an "any number can play" situation. The reason for this inverse-proportionality rule is obvious. The smaller the package, the clearer the image, the sharper the outline and impact, the more marketable the product. A four-man cabal can be feted on television and given *Time* cover treatment. Everyone knows fad-makers. The focus is a bit more blurred on trend-setters. The *New York Times* and *The New Yorker* banner them. Movement people are myriad, so they phase in and out of the back pages of smaller-circulation opinion journals.[1]

Missing from this "how-to" guide are the pop-theologians who cannot be classified with the fad-makers. They belong in the "one-man band" class, are *sui generis,* mutational. It is fatal to try to imitate them. For the conservatives, Billy Graham survived through the sixties. Name the second best-known Protestant mass evangelist. For the liberals, Bishop Pike was off by himself, taking his readers past psychokinesis, heresy, seances, Jesus-had-a-dagger, and ("way back when") mixed marriage, birth control, and Catholics in the White House. He has no successful imitators, nor has Malcolm Boyd or Robert Short; the author of *The Gospel According to Peanuts* need fear little challenge nor hope for much company from a prospective author of *The Gospel According to Mary Worth.* One can read these worthies with little sense of risk, since he is not asked to sign up for movements. The reader is asked only to observe, to stand in wonder.

Case studies should help make the point about distinctions between fads and trends or movements. The best known trend is (or was) the Theology of Hope. It could not be classified as a fad, since its propagators numbered more than four. It outlived the fad's time-span because some of its spokesmen write in German; Harper and

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1. Since this is a scholarly article, it demands at least one footnote. Not included in this fad-trend-movement range is the concept of the "segment," which is what I belong to and which raises an interesting question about followership. In Robert Campbell, O.P., *The Spectrum of Protestant Beliefs* (Milwaukee: Bruce, 1968) the author identifies radical theology (death-of-God) as a large enough identifiable segment of popular beliefs and attitudes to deserve inclusion. How large? William Hamilton, he says, estimates 100 to 200 men and women. Campbell earlier in the book says there was "no inclusion of what might be called 'developmental theology'—Martin E. Marty, Robert McAfee Brown, Jaroslav Pelikan, etc. It was felt these highly esteemed writers represented an articulate segment of publishing theologians but their views are not typical of a large identifiable segment of popular Protestant beliefs and attitudes." Take Hamilton's lower figure of 100. Subtract at least one (because our segment is smaller and subtract three more for the three named writers; that leaves a potential following of 96—32 each for Brown, Pelikan, and me. What all this proves is a bit uncertain, but who could pass up such a reference to "highly esteemed writers?"

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Row's translators worked faster on Jürgen Moltmann than did Herder and Herder's on Johannes Metz, and publication of books in this mode therefore stretched through several seasons. A Theology of Hope conference in 1968 demonstrated that the phenomenon was a trend and could not have made it as a fad. It was too complicated and difficult for mass dramatization. Its outlines are confusing and vague; in quiet ways its after-effects should be around for a while.

Early in the decade the New Hermeneutics appeared as more than fad, less than movement. Perhaps it could have become a movement, but at one conference devoted to the thought of the trend's shaman, Martin Heidegger, a star Heidegger pupil, Hans Jonas, issued a monitum against his teacher and most people were scared away. The New Hermeneutics, like the Theology of Hope, escaped fad status because of its obscurity. How can the television public grasp being-thrownness-over-there-againstness, when "God is Dead!" or "Make Love, Not War!" serve to condense other forms of thought.

The decade produced two movements. A movement has to have epochal significance. That is, it must last at least three publishing seasons. The first such movement was the Secular Theology, rooted in Dietrich Bonhoeffer (1945) and sprung on the public by Harvey Cox in 1965. This movement depicted an era in which men had moved permanently to a post-mythical, post-symbolic stage. Professor Cox was later seen celebrating with the Coritans and hermeneuticizing with the hippies while only rear-guard Catholic radicals were publishing secularization books.

Lest I confuse the readers by sounding non-committal, let me say that "early" Cox and his colleagues did theologians a favor by bringing the phenomenon of the secular to such prominence.

The other movement might be called The New Religiousness. People of secular employment, often sociologists like Peter Berger and Robert Bellah serve it and it is given depth by theologians as able as Karl Rahner. Harvey Cox is now in this camp. The roots for this movement go back, for Catholics, to Teilhard de Chardin, who re-enchanted and remystified the natural world. Paul Tillich in philosophy and Arnold Toynbee in history were also in the T-group of influencers. Their definitions of what it was to be religious were so inclusive that one could not escape being seen as religious, and the secular kept eluding their grasp.

I see no reason to complain about a decade which produced two movements to point to two such disparate tendencies in man and culture: surely, the promise for the future of theology is great.

The classic fad of the 1960s was the Death of God (b. 1965, d. 1966), an October to April phenomenon signalled at its beginning and its end by *Time* treatment. The alert reader will wonder what happened to one criterion: The Death of God seems to have been around longer than one publishing season. But appearances deceive; Death-of-God was not born in books. The season was simply delayed a year after *Time,* conference, television and lecture-circuit treatments. Remember, it takes publishers over a year to charter and produce a book. The criteria of intensity and the fact that "the other guy" was devoted to it both hold up; who admits, now, to having once been attracted to it? And it had at most four leaders; even two of those who had been singled out for inclusion claimed that they had been miscast.

FOCUS, FOR A MOMENT, on the problems that come up during the brief life of a fad. How does one survive such a phenomenon? My advice is simple. If you find a potential fad to be congenial, commit yourself to it. Be stigmatized, ostracized, persecuted, or crucified for it. What the world needs is people of conviction—and, unless you were the leader, you can always say later that you meant something different than the other leaders did and that the dirty old popular press and television exploited you. On the other hand, if a fad-to-be is distasteful, *don't* fight it. Let it be. Many people lost their credentials permanently by running around proving God-is-alive during the God-is-dead moment.

During the McLuhan-theology year, wise men did nothing. They waited until after the fact and the fad and came out with another book. During the Maharishi-theology year, sages who were square refused to grow beards; at most, they compromised on modest sideburns ("half committed, like *boiling* your draft card," says Dick Cavett). They outsnobbed and outlived Transcendental Meditation. Now, during the Marcuse-theology year, sagacious non-Marcusians don't try to fake it by running around clubbing everybody in the head for the sake of a humane humanity. They simply take their filing cabinets home from the office and hope that liberals will outlast backlashers. (Or is the current fad Cleaver-theology or Cleage-theology, Christian separationism coming from people who not long ago told us that integrationism alone was the will of God?)

The counsel to wait it out sounds dull, but those who take it can explain that they are simply pacing their careers better than fad-followers. They can spend their time in the library, where they will quite possibly meet William Hamilton and Thomas Altizer who are setting a new pace after the death-of-God moment. Even if their metaphor was exploitable, they did focus on the central theological problem of the day, and they should be heard from again—perhaps, as part of a movement?

Waiting it out is at least playing the game or knowing that a game is inevitable. What won't work is hoping for the process of theological innovation to end or to slow appreciably. Even the Garonne flows. Conservative theology went through the decade without producing a single book worthy of public note. Secular theology and the new explorations of religion, on the other hand, have

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provided a base for creative work in the 1970s. They have kept the options open, have alerted the public to the vitality of theology.

I, for one, then, look forward to the new decade, hoping to remain a friend and critic of faddists, trend-setters, movement-leaders. These all live in a world not of their own making. They are in part victims of rapidation, mass communication, and a mandate to make something of the raw materials provided by a pluralistic, changing, confused world. But a "how-to" adviser does well to alert his contemporaries: if someone shouts too loudly or too urgently in inviting you to join his movement, drag your feet creatively. If he asks for a show of hands, raise a hand, but keep your fingers crossed.

Buber's hallowing the everyday

A JEWISH VIEW OF REDEMPTION

CAROLYN R. SHAFFER

It might seem strange to turn to a Jewish theologian for the celebration of man's redemption already accomplished. But Martin Buber wrote in a Hasidic tradition strongly aware of the sort of empirical, daily reality to which Christians point when they think of the meaning of Easter. Christians, to be sure, attach redemption to Jesus Christ, while the Hasidim attach it to the goodness of God. But what is most exciting of all is the secular meaning of redemption in Buber's thought.

Usually people think of "secular" as that which is directed toward the world of man "here below" and of "religious" as that which is directed toward God "up above." They make *two* worlds, where Buber only sees *one*. In his theme, "the hallowing of the everyday," Buber has developed a notion both profoundly religious and profoundly secular—religious in its origin and intention but secular in its application and consequences. This theme originates, not with Buber himself, but in the teachings of Hasidism, a unique communal form of Jewish mysticism, and it has as its intention the affirmation of man and the world for the sake of God, that is the service of God "with one's whole life, with the whole of the everyday, with the whole of reality."

Despite its avowedly religious intent, however, this hallowing is meant to apply not only to the sacred sphere but to secular life as well. "It will not do," according to the teachings of Hasidism, "to serve God only in isolated hours and with set words and gestures." Buber is convinced that this teaching could have significant consequences in the secular world. He writes in *Hasidism and Modern Man* that "Hasidism has its word to speak in the crisis of Western man," and he identifies this message as "the Hasidic overcoming of the distance between the sacred and the profane."

One wonders whether Buber's message will ever be heard, for he insists upon trying to heal the ills of a secular world skeptical of God and religion with a message couched in unabashedly religious language. But an intriguing question is whether Buber's notion of "the hallowing of the everyday" does not implicitly contain a secular message despite its explicit religious orientation. By definition this notion does deal with secular life insofar as everyday life is to be hallowed. But does this hallowing necessarily add a religious or God-oriented direction to life which is unintelligible to secular man? It may not. In fact, if it can be shown that hallowing life essentially means fulfilling life and that, in Buber's thought, a secular man can fulfill his life by starting from himself rather than from belief in God, then one can say that this "hallowing of the everyday" does speak a secular word to a secular world.

The pious and often mythological overtones of Buber's message can be explained by the fact that he not only derives his theme of "hallowing" from Hasidism but chooses to express this theme principally through the vehicle of hasidic folklore. In *The Origin and Meaning of Hasidism* Buber interprets the hasidic myths of creation and redemption for us. The hasidim visualize creation in terms of the Kabbalistic myth of the divine sparks, a myth which presents creation as having its origin in the cataclysmic "breaking of the world-vessels" of divine grace. As a result of this cataclysm, "sparks have fallen into all things and are now imprisoned in them until ever again a man uses a thing in holiness and thus liberates the sparks that it conceals."

Using somewhat different Kabalistic imagery, Buber explains the consequences of this creation event: "God has fallen into duality through the created world and its deed: into the essence of God, Elohim, which is withdrawn from the creatures, and in the presence of God, the Shekina, which dwells in things, wandering, straying, scattered. Only redemption will reunite the two in eternity. But it is given to the human spirit through its service

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to be able to bring the Shekina near to its source, to help it to enter it." Both these myths express the intrinsic goodness of creation and man's active role in the reunification of all things through redemption. Man fulfills this created world when he liberates the sparks by hallowing things and when he helps reunite the Shekina with its essence by service.

In assigning man an active role in the redemptive process, Hasidism goes beyond the many other messianic interpretations of redemption which are content to look forward passively to a future event. The hasidic leaders (called *zaddiks*) teach that the mission of man "is not only to wait, not only to watch for the Coming One: man can work toward the redemption of the world." Such a teaching is related to the hasidic belief in the essential unity of God and intrinsic goodness of creation, a belief which rules out any absolute opposition between good and evil. "The Shekina embraces both the 'good' and the 'evil,' but the evil not as an independent substance, rather as the 'throne of the good,' as 'the lowest rung of the fully good.' " In his book *Good and Evil*, Buber relates this myth to hallowing by asserting that the "evil urge" which is within each man is nothing other than directionless passion which must be oriented toward God.

A sense of unity or wholeness runs through all hasidic teaching, but this unity is far from static or completed. Neither is creation a completed event of the past nor is redemption a single event in the future. Rather, "redemption, like creation, takes place at every moment" and "man's work is enclosed in God's in such a way that each moment of redemption is perfect in itself." By bringing redemption into the present, Hasidism overcomes the dualism and passivity usually inherent in religion with its waiting for a messiah or for "the next world." Instead, man's gaze is turned back upon himself and his natural world and he must learn to begin to hallow all things, even the most profane. For the "profane" is merely "the not-yet-hallowed."

Buber, profoundly impressed with these hasidic themes of unity and concreteness, makes "wholeness" the goal of his "hallowing of the everyday." Man's task, as defined by Buber, is to heal the divisions which sicken his life and thereby to find fulfillment at all levels—within himself, in his relations with other men, and in his relationship with God. He considers the most harmful split to be that between man's religious life and his secular life.

But this involves the assumption on Buber's part that modern man is actually interested in bringing the religious and the secular together. If this man no longer takes God or religion seriously, if he is by choice a secular man, then the division between the religious and the secular has, for him, become irrelevant. He simply devotes himself entirely to his work in the world. Strangely enough, this is the same point to which Buber comes when he does take God and religion seriously. His "hallowing of the everyday" simply means devoting oneself wholly to one's work in the world. The difference is that the non-religious man abolishes the duality of the sacred and the profane by reducing all things to the worldly, Buber by raising all things to the holy.

The critical question at this point is whether one can interpret Buber's concept of "hallowing" in a secular as well as a religious sense. Most certainly the aim of "hallowing" is religious—but not in the ordinary sense. As Buber explains in his small but significant book, *The Way of Man*, "in most systems of belief the believer considers that he can achieve a perfect relationship to God by renouncing the world of the senses and overcoming his own natural being," but for the hasid, while " 'cleaving' unto God is . . . the highest aim of the human person . . . to achieve it he is not required to abandon the external and internal reality of earthly being, but to affirm it in its true, God-oriented essence and thus so to transform it that he can offer it up to God."

Thus, while the goal of one's life—the achievement of an intimate relationship with God—is religious, the path to this goal is a secular one, the affirmation of the whole reality of earthly being. But one is called upon not only to affirm the natural world but also to transform it and offer it up to God. This religious intention, added to the act of affirmation, would appear to cancel out its secular nature. Closer inspection of Buber's words reveals, however, that one is called "to affirm . . . and *thus so* [or *by this very means*] to transform." The transforming, or hallowing, is not therefore a separate act of man but is implicit in the act of affirmation.

From his wording, it is apparent that Buber thinks that hallowing, although religious in its intent, does not add an extra and alien "religious" character to the secular act of affirmation. The secular and the religious are instead inextricably bound up in a single act of man. Buber sees no contradiction here because, as he puts it, all things have a "God-oriented essence," that is, by their very nature all things are directed toward God. Thus there is no contradiction between affirming the naturalness of things and hallowing them before God.

In Buber's eyes, even prayer does not require sacred forms nor does it add an extra spiritual quality to things. He tells the story of a zaddik who prays "with the floor and with the bench" and thus "elevates them." "But this 'elevation,' " Buber is swift to add, "is by no means to be understood as removing the worldly character of things or spiritualizing the world." In fact, Buber warns against confusing true hallowing with a false and unnatural piety. "Hallowing," he says, "is an event which commences in the depths of man, there where choosing, deciding, beginning takes place. . . . But he can only do this if he begins just as man and presumes to no superhuman holiness. The true hallowing of a man is the hallowing of the human in him." Buber's concept of hallowing then does not abolish the secular; rather, it embodies both a secular and a religious orientation in a single act, an ori-

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entation that is directed at once both toward man and toward God.

A secular man might object that the all-powerful, transcendent nature of God renders such a dual orientation impossible; that the notion of God, once postulated, will, by its very nature, encompass all of reality and bring the secular under its control. If, on the other hand, the transcendent element were eliminated, the secular orientation might retain its purity, but only by reducing religion to pantheism. The question, in other words, is whether God can be both transcendent and immanent without either controlling or being controlled by man.

Buber addresses this problem in two of his more philosophical works, the *Eclipse of God* and *Between Man and Man*, where he distinguishes between transcendence and actuality and between the the reality of God and the reality of man. "Transcendence and actuality do not stand in each other's way, but neither do they supplement each other, just as little as God and man supplement each other, but the one is wholly the reality of God and the other wholly the reality of man." This qualitative distinction between man and God allows God to be present in the affairs of man without determining or supplementing these affairs. Because God cannot be objectified at the level of man's reality, He remains an imageless God, a God who "ever gives Himself to be seen in the phenomena of nature and history, and remains invisible."

Buber assures secular man, however, that "from a transcendent reality of this kind, which more exactly expressed is a reality which remains transcendent in immanence, nothing can be inferred, least of all anything apt to limit the self-dependence of man as a source of events." Man cannot, for instance, explain away such worldly realities as the findings of science or of history or his own present actions by recourse to God but must take the responsibility for these actions upon himself. "While created by God," Buber explains, "[man] was established by Him in an independence which has since remained undiminished." Man, in effect, has been made "an independent partner with God." Thus, even if modern man does not share Buber's belief in God, he must admit that Buber's understanding of God does allow room for the secular, that his "hallowing of the everyday" does not mean simply offering all things up to a higher power but, rather, working responsibly toward the fulfillment of oneself and the world.

Up to this point it has been argued that Buber's "hallowing of the everyday" has a dual orientation, that it is at once both a religious and a secular notion. This thesis has been defended against the possible criticism that Buber's notion is of necessity solely religious; that, because of his insistence on a transcendent God, his notion cannot incorporate within itself a purely secular dimension. But a more subtle question now presents itself.

Is it not possible that Buber's "hallowing of the everyday" is not religious at all but is essentially a secular theme which simply bears the trappings of religious language? It has been shown that Buber has called upon man to turn his gaze away from the transcendent deity and back upon himself and his concrete world. As mentioned earlier, Buber presumes that the true essence of earthly being is a God-oriented essence and thus concludes that such a radically secular approach to life will inevitably lead man to God whether or not such a man starts from belief in God. If one seeks to enter into dialogue with the true essence of worldly things, the orientation toward God will automatically ensue. According to Buber, a man can even oppose God and still find Him. "A man can ward off with all his strength the belief that 'God' is there, and he tastes him in the strict sacrament of dialogue."

Given the fact that to find God man need only start with things as they are, one must then ask whether a conscious seeking after God is not only necessary but perhaps even detrimental to man's religious life. In his classic work, *I and Thou,* Buber has explicitly referred to man's sense of God as "a finding without seeking, a discovery of the primal, or origin." In fact, he has stressed that "man cannot approach the divine by reaching beyond the human; he can approach Him through becoming human. To become human is what he, this individual man, has been created for."

Turning to Man

Essentially, Buber is preaching a message of radical secularity. Although he refuses to give up the word "God," the "moral" of his notion of "hallowing the everyday" is that man should stop wasting his energy on a search for God and turn his efforts and attention to man himself. Buber repeats this message again and again in his essays on Hasidism.

"In Hasidism," he says, "it is the way from the world to God that is ever again indicated as decisive for personal development." At times he does not even mention God but states that man "must find his own self, not the trivial ego of the egotistic individual, but the deeper self of the person living in a relationship to the world." He explicitly raises ethics to the level of religion: "The 'ethical' actions are by their meaning and nature just as much religious actions as the 'religious.' "

To illustrate the point, Buber relates the story of a zaddik who, upon being asked whether love of God or love of a neighbor should take precedence, replied: "The true love of God begins with the love of men. And if one should say to you that he has love for God and has no love for men, know that he lies." The man "who does not love the world," Buber adds, "can know in his relationship to God only a God who is solitary, as it were, or the God of his own soul."

The great mistake of religious man, according to Buber, has not simply been his search for God, the Single

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One, but it has been his concentration on this "above" at the expense of his fellow men. Kierkegaard made this mistake by misinterpreting man's necessarily "exclusive relation" to God as "the excluding relation, excluding all others," including his one-time fiancee, Regina Olsen. But Buber retorts that "God wants us to come to him by means of the Reginas he has created and not by renunciation of them." Buber has, in fact, criticized Christianity in general because "it makes each man's salvation his highest aim," an attitude which Hasidism regards as "the highest form of self-intending."

The supreme irony in Buber's position is that, while insisting, on the one hand, that man must turn his attention from God to man, he demands, on the other, that for true "hallowing" man must do all things "for God's sake," he must " 'see things in God,' the things themselves." But if seeing things in God is, as implied here, the same as seeing the things themselves, then why bring God into the picture at all? By doing so, Buber weakens the radically secular implications of his message. He loses the attention of secular man. What this man may not see is that Buber's "God-talk" is more an appendage to his thought than an essential element in it; it is more a way of engaging in true "man-talk." For when Buber insists that man's approach to God must be through man himself, through becoming human, he necessarily relegates the notion of God to a peripheral position. In fact, reference to God becomes irrelevant when Buber identifies the search for God with the search for human fulfillment, when he equates holiness with wholeness. Religion becomes "nothing other than simple existence which has unfolded as a whole person." Certainly such a stance does not deny the presence of God in human growth and personal relationships; it merely renders talk of such a divine presence irrelevant.

My contention is that "God-talk" is not only unnecessary but detrimental to human relationships. In order to "see God" in another a man must change his focus from the person himself to a point through and beyond the person. Figuratively speaking, this means that the person must somehow lose his flesh-and-blood concreteness and become transparent in order that the man may "see through" him to God; he must become less a unique person and more a means to an end. In short, the conscious introduction of God into the immediacy of a human relationship effectively destroys the essential concreteness of the encounter. Moreover, it runs counter to Buber's view of "religious life" as "in the last resort, concreteness itself."

What Buber fails to do is distinguish between a person's immediate experience of an encounter and his later interpretation of this event. An encounter itself is just as full and concrete for secular man as for religious man. The event differs only in the later interpretation which each man gives to it. Upon reflection the religious man sees in his commitment to another a deeper relationship to a "commanding and claiming God." The secular man perceives only the human claim. But these differing interpretations are formed in retrospect, never in the immediacy of the encounter.

In actual practice, therefore, Buber's notion of hallowing is secular. It requires that a person forget about God and concentrate upon relating to others for their own sake. Or, as an hasidic saying advises, in helping his neighbor, a man "should act as though there were no God." To insist upon adding "for God's sake" to one's intention is, in fact, tantamount to doubting the God-oriented essence of all creatures; that is, to doubting that genuine love for another is in itself an expression of love for God.

This is the secular or man-oriented conclusion that emerges from Buber's initial religious presupposition, his belief that God is in all the things of the earth. Thus, despite the simple, religious language of his hasidic writings, Buber offers men, not pious platitudes but a call to action in the world. He translates hasidic talk about making the world "holy" by serving God into a secular challenge to make the world "whole" by serving man. And, strange as it may seem, this secular challenge issued by a Jewish theologian may best express the meaning of Easter for Christians who, after all, believe not only that God is in man but that God is man.

PLAYING THE GAME

THE SCREEN

If your kids are still on vacation and have already seen those three worthy films I reviewed in the May 30th column ("Run Wild, Run Free," "My Side of the Mountain," "Ring of Bright Water") here are a few more suggestions to get the young fry out of your hair for a couple of hours. What's more, you may enjoy some of these yourself.

MGM was wise to re-release its 1959 spectacular epic, "Ben-Hur," at this time. Children, who were babes in arms when it first appeared, are 10 now and ready for Lew Wallace's rousing adventure story set in the time of Christ. And their elders, who were thrilled by director William Wyler's stirring cinema in a movie that has human warmth (and a touch of corn) as well as action and elaborate spectacle, are ready to be thrilled again. On re-seeing the film recently, I found it stands up well, and the performances of the leads are as impressive now as they were back then—especially those by Charlton Heston in the demanding title-role of the Jewish prince, Jack Hawkins as the Roman officer who adopts him, Stephen Boyd as his former-friend-turned-villain, and Hugh Griffith as the sheik who befriends Ben-Hur. I also found the film's 212-minute running time excessive—but one thing

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I advise: don't leave before the magnificent chariot race, one of the best and most exciting scenes of its kind ever shown in a movie. I doubt if you'll get the kids to leave before the finale anyway.

Neither you nor the kids have to be surfing enthusiasts to enjoy "The Fantastic Plastic Machine," a 91-minute film beautifully photographed in Technicolor and Techniscope showing the journey of leading American surfers to Australia and the rematch there after the Americans had been defeated in San Diego. Although "the search for the perfect wave" is always uppermost in the film's narration, the first part of the movie is more like a travelogue than anything else as the scene moves from California to the Fiji Islands where the Americans display their surfing skills to the fascinated islanders who retaliate by treating their guests to ritual dances. Next stop of these WindanSea Surf Club members is New Zealand, which proves to be a temporary disappointment for its rainy weather and flat seas. At first, Australia seems to be a let-down too, when the Americans learn that the leading Aussie surfers will not be in the contest; then, worse yet, the Americans *are* beaten by the Aussies who do compete. But the Aussies interest the Americans, and us viewers, in the brotherhood of surfing which has given up competing in contests to further the art and beauty of the sport. At this point the film's title is made clear: it refers to the new, short, vee-bottomed surfboard the Australians are using to improve their skill in riding the crest of a wave. Also at this point, the picture bursts into some magnificent photography of Bob McTavish (riding his McTavish Plastic Machine board) and other surfers performing in giant waves. These shots provide new thrills for their extraordinary beauty and illustrate perfectly the philosophy and mystique ("An affinity between you and the water" with all the aggressions gone) of the true surfer. Whether or not surfing is your dish of tea, this is a film to be appreciated for its beauty and pleasure. And don't forget: wherever there are waves, there are people to ride them. The handsome movie was produced, directed and written by Eric and Lowell Blum.

Although most of the leading characters in "The Boys of Paul Street" are boys (two gangs of 'em fighting over possession of a vacant lot) and the Ferenc Molnar novel on which it is faithfully based is popular with juvenile readers in Europe, I have no way of telling how the movie will appeal to children in this country. It certainly would be good for them to see with its accurate turn-of-the-century Budapest settings and costumes, its effectively stated (without preaching) anti-war theme, and its attractive bunch of youngsters whose performances, under director Zoltan Fabri, are for the most part good. But these boys are English lads who look pretty much alike and their English speech mannerisms are at times so affected that one cannot interpret what they are saying. American kids may get impatient with this sort of thing, but if they stay with the movie to its bitter conclusion they will find the effort worthwhile. They may even realize that the boys from Paul Street and their enemies, the "Red Shirts," are emulating adults or behaving the way they think adults behave. This gives the film a slight tone of artificiality—which, however, does not detract from its main thesis: that war is futile. The leading boy, little Nemecsek (expertly played by sensitive, pug-nosed Anthony Kemp) who is the symbol of the ordinary soldier who does the dirty work and gets the dirty end, is instrumental in leading the Paul Street boys to victory in the big (and very well-staged) battle scene. He makes the supreme sacrifice, and he is mourned by both sides before the film's ironic finale. The vacant lot for which they fought is soon to have a building built on it. I'm sure our youngsters will get the point; and we may even hope that when they grow up and become our politicians, they will keep us out of the next war.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG

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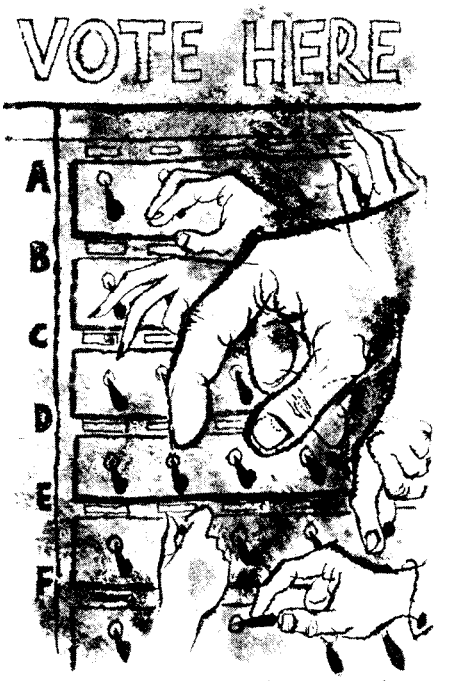
BOOKS

Of old politics and elder statesmen



The Making of the President 1968

THEODORE H. WHITE

Atheneum, $10

PHILIP NOBILE

Like Harold Stassen, T. H. White is ruining a good thing with his quadrennial lustings after the presidency. Once the ace reporter of the 1960 election, White has become with a succession of sequels just another lowered voice in the political wild. This third *Making* book is the plain *reductio ad absurdum* of the first, which—for all its fascination and birth of genre—was conspicuously sanguine on issues and soft on politicians.

Cutting through the fat of the ecstatic popular reception that attended the 1960 Camelot edition, Richard Rovere wrote in *The New Yorker:* "It is a sprawling book that contains a huge amount of fresh and interesting information, a good many sharp insights, and some embarrassingly lush writing about nothing of consequence. . . . It is marred by a rhetorical extravagance that seems to come from overexposure to politicians." *Christian Science Monitor* editor Erwin Canham fingered one probable consequence of this political chumming when he wrote of the same that White "says nothing at all about charges that the election was stolen by fraudulent voting and vote-countings in Illinois, Texas or elsewhere." This sort of talk would have spoiled not only the dramatic symmetry of JFK's victory as scripted by White, it would also have loused up the last chapter of the book—"The View From the White House"—in which the new President reveals himself to an old friend. (It was not for nothing that White was granted the first post-assassination interview with the widow or that he was the family's initial choice for the Dallas chronicle.)

While White's coziness with the candidates may not have hurt his books all that much in 1960 and 1964 when the old politics still had some kick, he is terribly guilty by his associations in *Making 1968*. Before discussing the major charge, let us pass to lesser crimes.

White fancies himself an historian, even a philosopher of history, in reporter's cloth. Wherever possible, he opts for the larger perspective, the pseudo-insight. The avant-forward quotes Plato's allegory of the cave to no ostensible purpose (except perhaps to stay one-up on the generation gap—since he writes later on in the law and order chapter: "It is doubtful whether any of the students involved in the protests of 1964-5-6-7 had recently read Plato"). John and Robert Kennedy are the Gracci brothers. Nixon and Humphrey are ultimately explained away as "two small town boys": "Though both men could now discourse with great experience and much data about budgets, missiles, space shots legislation and foreign affairs, the set of their minds, in discussing differences over such matters, had been shaped in Whittier, Southern California, and Doland, South Dakota."

Textual analysis also shows the author in the advance stages of the Rosetta Stone complex—an inordinate desire to set down sentences that will unlock the mysteries of an epoch. Thus the foreword begins: "This book is an attempt to tell what happened on earth in America, in 1968, while Americans planned to land on the moon." Venusian archeologists may find fortune in this obsession, but nowadays such a stance sinks in pretense.

White's gung-ho prose, of which much has been made, is just an intermittent annoyance. After you adjust to the flow of adjectives, metaphors and managed moods, the book reads right along, nothing spectacular, but hardly a chore either. When White lets go, though, he is bad like William Manchester is bad: "In 1960, the moon still hung in the skies, a flat disk to some, green cheese to others, a lantern for lovers in the fall—but incredibly remote, beyond man's ken."

The unhappiest feature of *Making 1968* is the reporter's undisguised sympathy for the establishment ("the first groupie of the power elite," wrote Jack Newfield in his *Village Voice* review). Except for the Wallace campaign and the peace movement, basely equated in their extremism, White is all heroes and worship: "those who came to the top were deeply concerned men, trying their best to offer directions to peace and good-will." Thus "few men have done more good in their time" than Lyndon Johnson. Johnson fell simply because he lacked "a sense of the flow of history" and the "political talent" to explain Vietnam—"a cause of which no American need ever have been ashamed." Of Nixon: "I came to believe one must respect this man: there was about all he said a conviction and a sincerity." "Within earshot, Humphrey could make the blood race, the heart beat faster." Clark Clifford was "a devout patriot, a fine mind, a probing questioner." On Chicago: "I find it difficult to criticize,

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morally or technically, the strategy and disposition of the Chicago police on Wednesday night." On the contrary, talking to Dave Dellinger, Chairman of the National Mobilization Committee to End the War in Vietnam, "was, on first meeting, like a tour through the world of innocence." Tom Hayden is reduced to "the youthful Lin Piao of the American guerrilla movement." Student protestors come off "like beasts clawing at cages that confine them, they saw laws as barriers to be torn down."

And so goes the politics of '68, fixed by White for the home team in whom he is well pleased.

Making 1968 does have its moments. Only White could sufficiently infiltrate the Humphrey and Rockefeller campaigns to uncover their inner dilemmas. His proximity to the Nixon people allowed scooping the Finch vice-president story and most likely Madame Chennault's attempted autumn sabotage of the Vietnam negotiations. But once again White avoids embarrassing his sources. He glides over Nixon's Southern strategy, for example, lays off Spiro Agnew and neglects to mention Drew Pearson's disclosures regarding the President-elect's earlier psychotherapy.

Apart from internal criticism, *Making 1968* fails for large reasons. A single reporter is simply incommensurate with a presidential campaign. Not only are newspapers and magazines quicker on the draw, but poets and novelists are also in the competition. While White procrusts books into chapters, the likes of Jeremy Larner, Jack Newfield and Norman Mailer are working in reverse.

"This is the most dramatic confrontation of America and its problems in over 100 years," White mused in *Newsweek* before publication. "It's just a question of whether I'm good enough to write the story for what it's really worth." He wasn't.

The Spirit And The Forms Of Love

DANIEL DAY WILLIAMS

Harper & Row, $6.50

BERNARD MURCHLAND

Professor Williams begins his book with the Hegel-like statement that love is spirit taking form in history. It has its roots in the biblical tradition and historically expresses itself in three major forms. Williams calls the first Augustinian and describes it as synthesis of New Testament faith with the neoplatonic vision of God and the world. The second type is Franciscan, a radical and joyful self-giving that breaks through the routine forms of societal life. Thirdly, there is the evangelical type of the Protestant reformers who combined a radical sense of sin with a concept of love as grace freely given. In the 20th century these types are exemplified respectively by Martin D'Arcy, Albert Schweitzer and Reinhold Niebuhr.

I am not much impressed with this part of Williams' book. It is too schematic, overdrawn and, withal, not very original. This is perhaps a necessary fault of any typological approach. Moreover, I am not ready to accept his definition of love—even Christian love—as an expression of spirit. Spirit, says Williams, "is the best word we have to indicate the concrete personal expression of living creative beings." What is the evidence for this bold assertion? Or, at any rate, how are we to understand it? The author offers no explanation. This is all the more odd in that his book is presented as an interpretation of love based on the new "process theology." One expects process thought to emphasize naturalistic over spiritualistic categories. Finally, Williams is too inclined to a vague use of homiletic language. For example, he tells us that it is the task of each age "to give its own account of the love which has brought us forth and under whose judgment we stand." I confess I find it difficult to understand any sense in which this century could be said to stand under the judgment of love. As Camus saw so clearly, it is not a word to be used lightly in an age of unrestrained human savagery.

On the other hand, Williams has an excellent discussion of Augustine's metaphysics and its baneful influence on our understanding of the power of love. Augustine's achievement was to have defined the living, creative God of the bible in the absolute, changeless terms of neo-platonism. By equating divine perfection with immutability he gave a rational explanation to the bibilical data and provided a solution that won the overwhelming approval of the orthodox tradition. But, as this book demonstrates, Augustine's solution was really no solution at all. The determination to keep all time and becoming apart from God, Williams argues, "led to disastrous consequences for the understanding of God's love." The Augustinian synthesis left the relationship of the temporal to the eternal unresolved; it could not square God's creative action with the problem of evil; it effectively negated the reality of human freedom and historical responsibility. For how can man's decisions make any difference when all has been pre-determined in eternity? The temporal order is in the final analysis nugatory.

The contemporary mind-set, it hardly needs pointing out, is quite out of sympathy with a worldview such as Augustine's. The wonder is that it has persisted in so much theology. But it is now clear that a number of thought currents are beginning to seriously erode the orthodox structure—historicism, existentialism and positivism, to say nothing of a firmly entrenched tra-

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MICHAEL ROLOFF edited *The Selected Works of Nelly Sachs* (Farrar, Straus).

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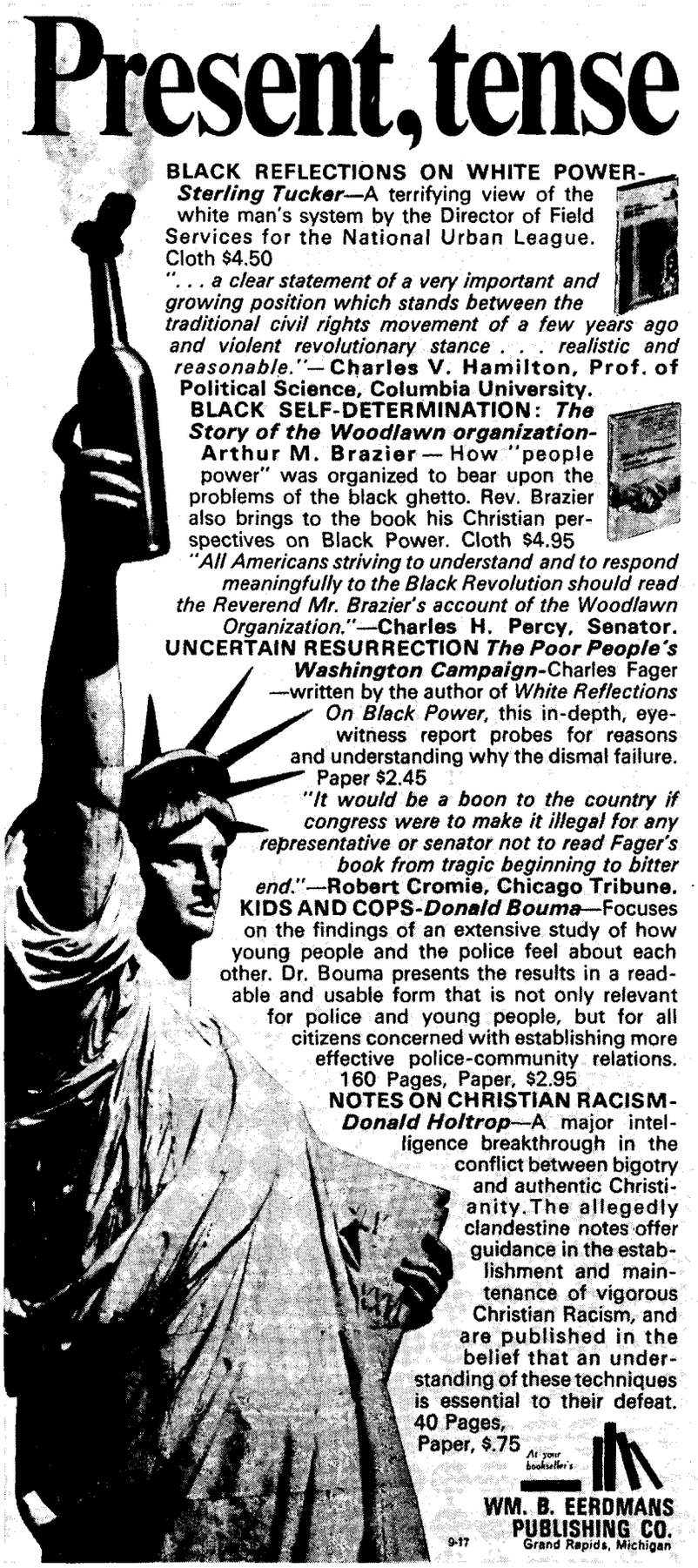
dition of aetheistic humanism. Williams is especially drawn to the theological implications of process philosophy as worked out by such figures as Bergson, Charles Hartshorne, the American pragmatists and above all, Whitehead. Process thinkers, influenced primarily by modern man's historical consciousness and the post-Darwin evolutionary emphasis, view the world as a complex of processes or events and stress the relative, the organic and the temporal. Creative becoming, it may be said, is their prime category.

Many process thinkers have been concerned with the philosophy of religion and have addressed themselves to the task of reconstructing the concept of God in historical-temporal terms. Thus Whitehead distinguishes between God's primordial nature (which is the totality of the world's meaning and possibility and as such abstract and unchanging) and his concrete nature which is shared with all creatures. Williams seizes upon this distinction to escape the puzzles raised by Augustine's thought. "What happens in this world makes a difference to God," he writes. "He responds concretely to every new event by taking it as a datum into a new phase of his own life and adjusting it within the harmony of his vision. What remains fixed for God is the absolute integrity of his aim which looks towards fulness of life for the whole creation. To move the world toward this fulfillment, God shares in the concreteness of events." This insight is developed in a chapter on the relationship between love and being.

The final portion of *The Spirit and the Forms of Love* takes up some Christological themes (incarnation, sin, redemption, atonement) and discusses some ways in which love applies to such practical areas as sexuality and justice. While not powerfully original there are many worthwhile insights here. Williams is a sensitive theologian, with a reliable grasp of present-day anxieties. On balance, however, it seems to me that he tries to cover too much ground. A good deal of his material remains loosely organized and unfocused. For example, a Christian sex-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ual ethic is sketched in less than four pages. In the last chapter we are given a brief process account of mind that is quite unsatisfactory. It is disheartening to see process thought contrasted unfavorably to Plato, surely one of the greatest of process thinkers. When Williams says that for Plato reason gets nearer the truth the further it gets from time, change and passage, he is surely reading the Platonists rather than Plato. Indeed, far better than many latterday process thinkers, Plato saw that truth resides essentially in dramatic intensity. As Randall has put it, truth for Plato is not "a glimpse into some impossible heaven, but an illumination cast upon actual human life by the discernment of its possibilities."

Williams is right to argue that process categories are immensely useful in interpreting received Christian doctrines. I only wish he had made a stronger case than he has.

Why France Fell

GUY CHAPMAN

Holt, Rinehart & Winston, $7.95

To Lose A Battle

ALISTAIR HORNE

Little, Brown $12.50

JOHN A. LUKACS

Twenty-nine years ago the Germans conquered the French. This was a great event, without precedent in modern history. I write "conquered," because Germany had defeated France before but this time she conquered her just about entirely. I write "Germans" and "French," because this was a contest between entire nations, not only between states.

The German victory was planned and executed with a daring and a perfection virtually unprecendented in the history of modern warfare, certainly in the history of the twentieth century. The French had not won a single skirmish, let alone a battle. For a moment it seemed that Hitler's Germans had won the most astonishing war in the history of modern civilization. Eventually they would go under, though the French had little to do with their defeat.

The memory of 1940 lives deep in the consciousness of the most arrogant or even the youngest of Frenchmen. There are not many good French histories about it, perhaps with reason. When it comes to their own history the French simply disregard the contributions of historians of other nations. Sometimes they are right, since on occasion Frenchmen will write about the history of their own country in the way no one else can. With 1940, however, they have not yet come to terms.

They will ignore, too, the respectable contributions of these two English writers. We, on the other hand, ought to devote some interest to them. In view of their qualifications they could have done a little better.

Guy Chapman, a very fine historian and a sensitive writer, devoted many years to the study of the Third Republic of France; he also may have written the finest history of the Dreyfus Case in any language, which is no mean feat. Saddened and exercised by the collapse of bourgeois France in 1940, he wrote *Why France Fell,* devoting himself to military history. The result is one of the most detailed accounts of the campaign of 1940 but little besides. There is the expectable, regimental and topographical, bog of details, all of it running one way. Throughout this serious volume one senses the sadness and the exasperation of this author with the French performance in 1940. He is extremely critical of De Gaulle and at times disillusioned with Churchill. One may wonder whether this kind of criticism would have occurred to the author had he written this book a decade earlier.

Alistair Horne's book is the last in a trilogy. I have admired the first two, on the Franco-Prussian War and on Verdun, and I am inclined to give *To Lose a Battle* a strong "B" but not more. After describing the decisive first fortnight of the campaign in more than 530 pages the author suddenly winds up his book, spending less than 70 on the crucial month that followed. Somehow one gets the impression that he got tired of his task. Unlike Chapman, he tries to paint an entire portrait of this decaying, overripe France, but he does not wholly succeed. He cannot help but admire the Germans' military qualities, but having said his bits about that, he seems a little woozy, not quite knowing what to say and think about them, as indeed are an increasing number of Englishmen who now write about the second World War. Horne, too, is critical of De Gaulle, in the opinion of this reviewer unduly so. De Gaulle was, after all, the only French general officer who in 1940 succeeded in actually pushing the Germans back for a few miles during a day or so. More than that he could not do, partly because of his own faults, but beggars can't be choosers, and in contemplating those brilliant and painful scenes of 1940 I believe that all civilized men, who have loved France, were and are beggars.

How we begged the French to fight! How we begged God to bless the French! How our minds begged for one sign, one small victory, one inspiring French act of courage, to suggest that

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Hitler's Germans were not invincible and that Western civilization would survive! In retrospect, our hopes were wholly devoid of reason. The French simply couldn't have stopped the Germans in 1940, not because of wanting armaments or wanting generalship but because the way they then were and the way the Germans then were. Perhaps in those dazzling June days we, all, were beginning to sense this; and we hoped for one sign, one voice that would tell us, and the public world, that it wasn't so. There appeared one unknown French general who said that it wasn't so. And eventually it wasn't.

That weary and sad word, "eventually."

Why Priests Leave

EDITED BY JOHN A. O'BRIEN

Hawthorn Books, $5.95

PHILIP DEASY

When, on May 10, 1968, Father George Frein, after ten years as a priest, informed his archbishop in person to person confrontation that he was resigning from the priesthood, the archbishop asked him, "How does a priest come to think the way you do, so that he can leave the priesthood and the Church without feeling that he is doing something very wrong?" Frein might have replied, although he would not have been understood, that he was leaving the archbishop's idea of the priesthood and the archbishop's idea of the Church. In any case there should have been no question of Frein's "leaving the Church." That the archbishop assumed that leaving the priesthood necessarily included leaving the Church is further indication of what another contributor to *Why Priests Leave* remarks, "Priests are separated from bishops most frequently because they have different experiences with the Christian life. . . . The bishop experiences the Gospel and the Christian message one way, the younger priest in a totally different way." The clergy has an awesomely wide generation gap.

To another priest about to resign, Joseph Blenkinsopp, the question raised (by himself, not by his archbishop) was "whether we are ever going to get beyond the stage of being either shocked or titillated at regular intervals about priests leaving, and start belatedly to look at the problem as a whole and talk about possible solutions."

Why Priests Leave adequately answers both Blenkinsopp's question and the archbishop's. Its title might indicate merely more of what we've all been reading, to saturation point, in magazines and newspapers, ever since James Cavanaugh's anonymous piece in *The Saturday Evening Post*. Because he did not want to add to that kind of trivia, or to be thought of as encouraging defections, Father O'Brien first rejected the publisher's invitation to put together such a book. What changed his mind was the subsequent evidence that the American hierarchy in formulating a Committee on the Ministry and Life of the Priest would welcome the kind of enlightment that would be provided

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by a group of scholarly, honest and articulate contributors carefully selected from the considerable number of those who had left the ministry in recent years. Father O'Brien formed his own editorial advisory committee to help in making the best selection. Among the twelve ultimately chosen, four had been Jesuits; two, Paulists; three, secular priests; one, a Maryknoll Father; one, a Benedictine; and one an English priest who had belonged to an unnamed teaching congregation.

Underlying all the "Intimate Stories of Twelve Who Did" (the book's subtitle) is the thesis that optional celibacy for Catholic priests of the Latin rite is an idea whose time has come. Father O'Brien himself solidifies the thesis in his own two concluding chapters, "Marriage: An Inalienable Right," and "Time for a Change." Nine of the twelve contributors describe at length the roles of the particular women who came into their priestly lives and whom they subsequently married. Unfortunately, the gushiest and most melodramatic of these, including a Gothic horror experience with a psychiatrist, is the very first story of the book. The others, especially by comparison with the first, are commendably restrained, although the titles given them like "I'm Not Lonely Now," "My Loveliest Gift," "For the Love of Jeanne" might suggest otherwise.

The most intellectually impressive and thorough of the contributions are those by Eugene Bianchi and Joseph Blenkinsopp. Both call for nothing less than a radical restructuring of Catholic clerical life. Bianchi sees that life as altogether "too bound by monastic and authoritarian traditions"; the crying need is for freedom to experiment with other modes of priestly ministry. Blenkinsopp sees the priesthood "presently structured and practiced, as largely a sociological anachronism." Both men, of course, are in favor of a married clergy. They are also the only two contributors who speak out against a kind of diluted concubinage in which many priests indulge, those warm personal relationships that ignore the possibilities of deep involvement on the woman's part and often lead to regretful compromises.

A recurring note among many contributors is the lamentable lack of genuine community life among priests. As one states, "I have heard words that come from priestly mouths to other priests that would have been condemned in the ugliest of families." Jealousy and backbiting, a resentment toward those who intellectually or spiritually rise above the prevailing mediocrity, are all too prevalent. From the early middle years on, deep priestly friendships appear to be comparative rarities.

Also, the warmhearted spontaneity of earlier seminary intimacies has a tragic way of evaporating into the selfish individualism of later years. Each priest has his own little "racket," his own social life among lay friends, his own immediate personal concerns . . . and little else. "Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity," may be a condition as rare as that "gift" of celibacy that very young men about to be ordained are presumed to have.

In his introductory chapter, Father O'Brien calls *Why Priests Leave* "an unusual book." Indeed it is, and refreshingly so.

The Ruined Map

KOBO ABÉ

Knopf, $5.95

Between Life and Death

NATHALIE SARRAUTE

Braziller, $5.00

Two Days, Two Nights

PER OLOF SUNDMAN

Pantheon, $4.95

DAVID J. DWYER

In one of his notebooks, Scott Fitzgerald left himself this reminder: "Beware the man who would give his last *sou* to a beggar in the street, for he would also give it to you and that would be something you would not be able to bear." Two of the novels reviewed here, *Between Life and Death* and *The Ruined Map*, were written by people who want to press into our hands the last bits of some peculiarly personal coinage, even if they have to pry our fingers apart to accomplish the transaction, obviating much of the pleasure we might otherwise derive from their work.

For there is no doubt they are both pleasurable and illuminating writers. Kobo Abé's *The Ruined Map* is a metaphysical detective story and, as such, must come to the English-speaking reader with a couple of strikes against it. Our language has brought the subgenre of hardboiled-private-eye-blood-opera pretty much to its peak, but in so doing has taught us always to take such things *cum grano*. Thus, we would be more surprised than pleased if Mike Shayne, between a demi-rape and a tooth-scattering brawl, should offer a discourse on id and super-ego.

What Abé attempts in the characterization of his hero is not much less

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schizophrenic than that. The detective has been hired to find a missing husband. He begins auspiciously enough with a "just the facts, ma'm" interview of the wife, an alcoholic but a cooperative witness. The problem, it rapidly develops, is that neither she nor anyone else has anything of substance to tell him. By the third chapter, we realize that such clues as there are will lead not to the quarry but through the messy backstreets of self-doubt to some personal and nearly incommunicable revelation.

But something goes wrong and we end with a shopworn insight about urban man's failure to develop readable "maps" of his present, much less his recent past. What's wrong is that a very good writer has tried to do two things at once and has failed, has just missed telling us something important about ourselves. Abé is not much good at the easier of the two things, the hack missing person puzzle; sadly, in shuffling the two, he has lost the other thing, the luminous and difficult beauty such earlier works as *The Woman in the Dunes* have shown to be well within his reach.

To worry one last dying squeak from a tormented metaphor, the false coin Nathalie Sarraute passes off on us in *Between Life and Death* is, unlike Mr. Abé's, a deliberate counterfeit. Her central character is a writer and her central concern is the "mere complexities, the fury and the mire" of his creative life—the whole thing smacks not of autobiography (too little occurs to justify that word) but of alteregoism. And, as the young Turkish poet Murad Osman-Talaat has written:

> . . . nothing strikes an alteregoist with more
> horror than the pros-
> pect that someone may be
> converted to his way of seeing . . .

Miss Sarraute rattles the reader around in this writer's head for nearly two hundred pages without a "conversion," without a coincidence of understanding between reader and character. This is partly the fault of the book's hyperintellectuality, even more of its prose.

Maria Jolas' translation is extraordinarily good, in the somewhat extraordinary sense that it accurately reflects a falling-off in Miss Sarraute's style. Her previous work, especially *The Golden Fruits*, had a witty consistency of tone that now seems shattered; large stretches of *Between Life and Death* could have been written by a dyspeptic machinegun.

The book's dustjacket, quoting *Le Monde*, tells us this style is "new, simple in its means but bold in form." It is certainly "bold," if not audacious, in some of its elements—I cannot recall another book in any language wherein so many pronouns do (or attempt) the work of so few appositives. But is there anything original in such writing as this:

"Perhaps it's better to wait a little longer, continue to postpone the moment. . . that it's really no longer possible to resist, that that forces your hand. . . That. What's that, after all? Everybody out here keeps on saying it, keeps shouting it from the rooftops: there's no 'that' that matters." [dots and spacing in original]

or this:

"The fall of day. Poor human glory. Not the pain of trying. Or again, when our material interest is involved in it. As in Inga's case. Yes, her. She owes it to herself. Oh, I'd be proud and happy."

The second passage quoted seems to me as representative of Miss Sarraute's "new" style as the first—despite the fact it was written by Valery Larbaud in 1921, in self-confessed if unsuccessful imitation of Joyce.

Per Olof Sundman's *Two Days, Two Nights,* on the other hand, is the sort of novel of which one tends to say "not a word could be changed." That's hyperbole, of course, but in the service of the truth. Sundman works in a stark, almost brutal style for which I can find only misleading analogies in modern English; it is somewhere between Jack London and the Hemingway of *The Old Man and the Sea.* Yet, Sundman's language reflects a view of the natural world different from either London's or Hemingway's.

The environment throughout is ferocious, yet the story focuses so closely

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on the restrained ferocity of the two main characters that we never feel the wind and snow as a direct threat. The two of them are hunting something (it would be unfair to say precisely what) and they find it; that is the story. Or, put another way, like all great horror stories, *Two Days, Two Nights* is essentially comedic—"How awful! how terrible!" we say to ourselves and then it dawns on us that everyone has gotten exactly what he wanted, gotten it "good and hard."

A Punishment for Peace

PHILIP BERRIGAN, S.S.J.

Macmillan, $4.95

JOHN L. McKENZIE

This review almost writes itself. If I can explain why a man whom I like and respect and who writes with such eloquence and persuasion and who has said so many things I have said—and better still, so many things I have not said—has written so many things I do not like, the review will be finished. I do not mind pointed criticisms of American government and business; after all, very few people know me well enough to know how deeply cynical I am about governments and statesmen. I do not mind criticism of white power and white racism; Man is the bastard of the cosmos, and the White Man is the bastard of the human race. I certainly do not mind criticism of the church as the lackey of the military-industrial complex; I knew before Berrigan did that the church can be bought, although I must remember to steal his phrase that the church is both bride and whore.

What it it, then? Things like the following come to mind. I have become accustomed to the guilt-jags and self-flagellation of the white liberal; I still do not enjoy it. Guilt by association, as far as we honkies are concerned, has become a way of life with them; none of us can do anything right or think good thoughts. Thinking becomes a bit fuzzy in such an atmosphere of emotion. The black man is a victim, but he is also an agent; let us not dishonor him by treating him as purely passive. Granted that the white race all over the world has all the property and all the guns, the only moral difference between white and colored races anyone can see is that we have it and they want it. I would like to think that black messianism is going to redeem mankind, and in particular white man, from his enslavement to affluence, but it is not there to redeem us. If Martin Luther King were the typical black leader one might have some hope; but he was rejected by his own people before someone still unknown arranged to have him done in, as leaders who rise above the morality of their followers can expect. If I am forced to look to the likes of Stokely Carmichael and H. Rap Brown for moral and spiritual leadership at a high level, please allow me a little time to go off in the corner and be sick.

I am surprised that men as enlightened as Phil Berrigan—and I know many others with the same blind spot—can profess assurance that violence will solve no problems, and then, unless I seriously misunderstand them, look to a violent interracial civil war as the only thing which will clean out the corruption of white society. It will clean out corruption to replace it by other corruption. Phil Berrigan has paid a price for the profession of non-violence much higher than the rest of us pacifists are willing to pay. Let him make the price worth while by maintaining the principle even when it touches black attacks on white persons. Black violence and black racism are not the cure for white violence and white racism; and I refuse to admit that this statement makes me a patron of white violence and white racism. If killing will not solve the problem of Vietnam, it will not solve the problems of the ghetto either.

Black rage is a sad fact; it is the only rage I ever heard of which has been promoted into the list of the cardinal virtues. Rage is rage, whatever its color may be. I am a little bit tired of lectures to the effect that when black murder and black arson happen I must understand their motives. Confound it, I am no more obliged to understand their motives than the motives of any criminal. Poverty has bred crime ever since poverty was invented; crime is often but not always the warfare of the have-nots against the haves. It has often been glamorized; and I suppose there are black Robin Hoods in the ghettos who have not yet been recognized outside. Most of the victims of black crime are black people; as a black friend once remarked, those fellows are really interracial. Whatever this is, it is not a revolutionary struggle for liberty, equality and fraternity; it is just crime, and it is no better and no worse than the crimes of white men. There are some problems where color is irrelevant.

One has to be no more than an amateur historian to know that America, like all earlier empires, is going to march to the brink of *hybris* and plunge in. The question is not whether it will go but when. I think it is sturdy enough to last a longer time than Berrigan gives it, but this may be merely academic. For someone, if not for our generation, it will be more than academic what re-

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places it. I do not accept hints that the world is full of healthy political societies waiting to fill the void created when America collapses. Let us take Vietnam; Berrigan and I agree that the Vietnamese should determine their own affairs. I must say that nothing in the history of this unhappy country warrants any assurance that they will not mess up their own affairs beyond all recognition. My principle, if I have one, is that people should be allowed to make their own mess. I am fairly sure that the Vietnamese will. Will they be better off? Once we ask the question, we are minding their business. I understand that this is just what the rest of the world is tired of.

This may set forth some of my dissatisfactions. Let me conclude with the statement that no serious person should miss the book. It is short but high caliber; you cannot read it without thinking, which may hurt.

Illuminations

WALTER BENJAMIN

Edit. Hannah Arendt

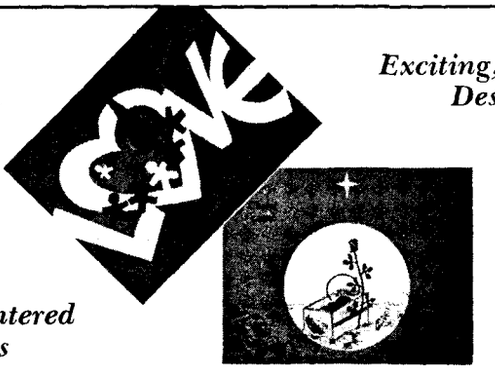
Harcourt, Brace, $5.95

MICHAEL ROLOFF

More than a quarter century after his death in 1940, a sparse selection from the work of Walter Benjamin, one of the finest and most paradoxical German writers, appears in this country, admirably domesticized by Hannah Arendt, transmogrified frequently, rather than translated, by Harry Zohn. With the essays on Proust, Baudelaire, Kafka, Lesskov, Brecht's Epic Theater, and *On the Task of the Translator* (a proper translation of which can be found in *Delos* 2, 1968) the selection remains true to the editor's purpose to present Benjamin in the role of literary critic; by also including the essay *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction*, the *Theses on the Philosophy of History*, and the more personal piece *Unpacking My Library*, the selection proves the introduction's valid contention that Benjamin cannot be confined in that role—or in any role at all. The introduction itself comprises one fifth of the book's 280 pages, including the inane index.

"Boredom," Benjamin writes in the Lesskov essay, "is the dream bird that hatches the egg of experience. A rustling in the leaves drives him away. His nesting places—the activities intimately associated with boredom—are already extinct in the cities and are declining in the country as well. With this the gift for listening is lost and the community of listeners disappears." Evident is the poetic strength of this passage, as is Benjamin's characteristic ability to think in terms of correspondences between physical and spiritual manifestations, the elimination of that dichotomy. At least as noteworthy, however, is his ability to think in terms of changing interdependent relationships . . . on a small as well as a large scale. All these abilities, taken together, make Benjamin a dialectical thinker of the first order. In contrast to the dialectical materialists of the Frankfurt Institute for Social Research (Theodor Adorno, Max Horkheimer, Herbert Marcuse), with whom he was closely associated, one could call Benjamin a dialectical realist. Aware of some of the deficiencies of German philosophical discourse (its declining realism, a decline which increases in English translation) Benjamin re-invented an older, more concrete, way of writing philosophically by consciously endowing images with the power of concepts.

Thinking in terms of interdependent relationships in time, in fluid structures if you will, predisposed Benjamin toward Marxism. However, he became a Marxist who was unable "to investigate or think in anything but a theological manner—namely in accordance with the Talmudic teaching of the 49 gradations of significance of each place of the Torah." He found that "with respect to hierarchies of significance the most threadbare communist platitude had more of them than the contemporary bourgeois profundities which never contain anything but apologetics." (Apologetics that is for the existing conditions.) Benjamin, a theological Marxist, a negative theologian even, who regarded language as magic and the word sacred, came to Marxism from the religion of literature where texts are sacred: yet he could read a city as a book, with the same archeologist's perspicacity. To belittle his Marxism, as Hannah Arendt does, therefore means to belittle his theological, dialectical thinking too, which Arendt does, and, consequently, to deprive Benjamin of the chief sources of his strength and greatness. To extricate Benjamin from his mode of thinking and call him a critic



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who thought like a poet is to say very little; it is to separate his power of expression from his thinking and what he said. To isolate power of expression and abstract it at the expense of what is said is to castrate a writer.

At the same time that Hannah Arendt seeks to dissociate Benjamin from Marxism and his dialectical materialist friends, she nudges him in the direction of Heidegger, whose influence Benjamin despised, while yet favoring his close association with Brecht. One would assume that Benjamin's unequivocal endorsement of Brecht's production might introduce certain contradictions into the dismissal of Benjamin's Marxism. Not for Hannah Arendt. She prunes Brecht's Marxism with similar ease. What Brecht and Benjamin shared, according to her, was the quality of being poets who expressed themselves concretely. Reading the introduction one would never guess that Benjamin could have written (in *The Author as Producer*): "What we have to demand of the photographer is the capacity to give his photo the inscription that will tear it out of the fashionable process of obsolescence and endow it with revolutionary usefulness." (Benjamin used the word "inscription" metaphorically; something that the photographer saw is inscribed on the photo and speaks to us, we can "read" the photo.) The Brecht piece Benjamin particularly admired was *The Measures Taken*, so paradoxically, pessimistically yet categorically pro-revolutionary a play that the Communist Party, for whom it was written, wanted no part of it. Benjamin regarded this play as possessing revolutionary usefulness because it is dialectical in structure and argumentation, pessimistic about facile notions of progress, because it combines surrealistic and critical procedures in an artistic model, because it tears textures apart—it also tears itself apart for inspection by the audience. Benjamin came to Brecht from surrealism, whose influence on Benjamin Hannah Arendt emphasizes without specifying its nature or including Benjamin's extraordinary essay on the French surrealists explicitly endorsing the surrealist's route to revolutionary Marxism.

Still, it is odd that Benjamin, who detested nothing as much as utilitarianism, should have employed the word "useful" in connection with revolutionary. This juxtaposition will become more, or less, contradictory, depending on one's reading of Benjamin's Ninth Thesis, where he writes: "A Klee painting named 'Angelus Novus' shows an angel that appears to be about to move away from something at which he is staring. His eyes are wide open, as is his mouth, his wings are spread. This is what one must imagine the angel of history looks like. His face is turned toward the past. Where a chain of events appears before us, he perceives only a single catastrophe which keeps piling wreckage upon wreckage and hurls it in front of his feet. It would seem the angel would like to stay, awaken the dead and make whole what has been smashed. But a storm is blowing from paradise; it has got caught in his wings and is so strong the angel can no longer close them. This storm irresistibly pro-

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pels the angel into the future to which his back is turned, while the pile of debris before him grows skyward. This storm is what we call progress." What could be the wished-for "inscription" on the photo that tears out from the process of obsolescence and endows with "revolutionary usefulness" but a remnant of paradise? And this was something that Benjamin himself practiced exceedingly well with his quotations: gems that manifest the absence of paradise, illuminating the dross, increasing the storm and the catastrophe. It is not that this practice of tearing out of context violates the original texture, something that Hannah Arendt, invariably sentimental, finds deleterious, but that these quotations, like the inscription on the wished-for photo, show up the debris for what it is. For Benjamin works of art were remnants of paradise and when he found them he rescued their revolutionary usefulness, the very opposite of museum preservation. That accounts for the freshness and strength with which Baudelaire, Proust, etc. speak to us through Benjamin's essays. They are reborn here in their own and in their time's singularity.

In an understanding of Benjamin all the contradictory and paradoxical parts of that complicated equation, that talmudic juggling act, *The Theses on the Philosophy of History,* have to be taken into account: the storm blowing *from* paradise, the angel's longing to return, Benjamin's unique ability to trace chains of events, his equivocal concept of progress, even of paradise perhaps, his express wish for the catastrophe to reach even more monumental proportions, for judgment day I suppose, the end of time. Benjamin's writings may be compared to the calm tense eye of a hurricane, without which the hurricane would lack its strength. Or, as it has been put by Theodor Adorno: "To understand Benjamin properly one must feel behind his every sentence the conversion of extreme agitation into something static, indeed, the static notion of movement itself." Benjamin, who had a foretaste, or aftertaste, of paradise and did not know quite which, contained within him, in uniquely pure form, all the explosive tendencies of this century. His work therefore possesses "revolutionary usefulness." That may be an embarrassingly sour apple to have to bite into, as it apparently is for Hannah Arendt, but the bite had better be taken unless Benjamin is to be consigned to the dustheap of history.

CORRESPONDENCE

(Continued from page 499)

abused, the downtrodden, and exploited" do anything positive. They scream, they abuse and insult those who insist on obeying the laws of the land. But never do these so-called latter-day saviors ever spend an afternoon cleaning the apartment of an aged couple. I have yet to hear of them going into the ghettos and baby-sitting for a colored woman who has to go and work to support her family. How many of them have ever visited an old folks home? Have they ever tutored ghetto children who are behind in their studies? Have they ever repaired the rundown homes of the "oppressed masses"?

It is easy to destroy but much harder to build. Many of these protesters protest everything except the money they get to continue their childish tantrums. They deplore the establishment yet they go and get relief checks to continue living at their intellectual and emotional level. And who gives them these checks? Why nobody but the establishment whom they despise.

I do feel sorry for the Fourteen and the Nine and their kind. I pray for them. I pray that some day they realize that Our Lord Jesus Christ was a revolutionary who never committed an act of violence, who did not insult or preach violence. On the other hand he himself was the victim of insults and violence. He advocated cooperation with the establishment when he said to give to Caesar the things that are Caesar's. And when He was tried unjustly and wrongly condemned to death He did not scream, curse or cause confusion. On the other hand He prayed for his persecutors. (REV.) PAUL BEDARD

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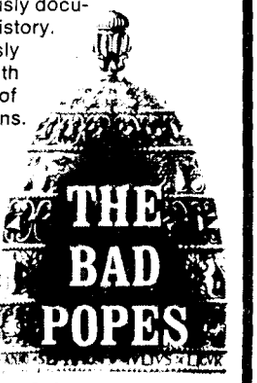

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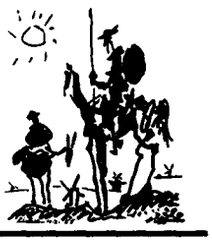

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